CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 22 February 1997 • Issue 257

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CBW Coach and Bus Week

Quality is key to public sea change

PROOF that the pendulum of public opinion is starting to swing in favour of public transport comes with the remarkable admission by the RAC that society simply cannot continue its unquestioning worship of the car.

We describe this submission as remarkable, not because it flies in the face of the inevitable, but because it comes from an organisation built on a foundation of car use.

Needless to say, the RAC is not recommending its members to sell their cars and turn to universal use of public transport. It has taken a pragmatic approach to the problems that we all know exist.

Traffic congestion shows no sign of abating. It is unpleasant, timewasting and expensive. And, as we have repeated many times in *CBW*, there is an environmental cost.

The argument is so well rehearsed that every *CBW* reader will share the view stated by Volvo md Sandy Glennie in Scotland last week. "The bus is the key to the urban environment. It is cost effective and immediate - it's available now."

Although the coach and bus industry will recognise these sentiments, it is thanks to its repetition on every available opportunity that the message is starting to make serious inroads into the public conscience.

But, make no mistake, the industry can take credit for statements such as that from the RAC.

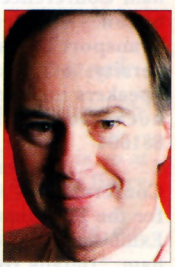
Nobody would think twice about a shift from the comfort of a car to a crowded bus if the experience was perceived as unpleasant. Quality is the key.

There are many examples of first-class coach and bus services - enough to guide public opinion but still someway short of the situation where quality is universally available.

In this issue of *CBW* we have a controversial call to raise the entry standards into the industry (see page 12). From this, it is argued, quality service will flow without the threat from the low-cost new entrant.

On the other hand, Dave Parry says it is low-cost tour operators who damage the image of the industry by booking low-quality coaches.

We would like to know what you think.



Mike Morgan, Editor

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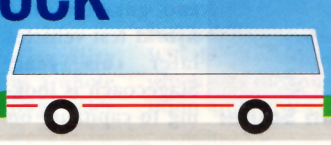
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events

25 February: Omnibus Society meeting, LT HQ, 55 Broadway, London SW1. David Beaman on Hong Kong (with a taste of India). Details from Barry Le Jeune on 0171 918 3295

10-12 March: CPT Scottish Council Annual Conference, Gleneagles Hotel, Perthshire. Theme is 'Planning for the Future. Details from Peter Thomson on 0141 639 4984, fax 0141 616 0866

12 March: ICE, AME South Eastern Association Annual Conference, Swanley, Kent - Transport, the Way Forward. Details on 0181 741 1516, fax 0181 741 5993

19 March: CIT East Anglia meeting — The traffic commissioner and licensing of goods and passenger vehicles, south room, third floor, University centre, Mill Lane, Cambridge, 6.30pm for 7pm. Details from Jeff English on 01603 457348

19-20 March: British Travel Trade Fair '97, Hall 9, NEC, Birmingham. Pre-register by phoning the Ticket Hotline on 01926 435843

20 March: CTC seminar 'Coaching into the Millennium' at BTTF. Space limited so book by calling Rupinder Heir on 0181 910 7961

25 March: Omnibus Society meeting, LT HQ, 55 Broadway, London SW1. Gavin Booth, 1986 and all that: 10 years of deregulation. Details from Barry Le Jeune on 0171 918 3295

14/15 April: Smart Cards in Transport, Implementation and Development Conference, The Selfridge Hotel, London. Details on 0181 743 8787, fax 0181 740 1717

17/18 April: 21st Nottingham Conference and Exhibition - Influencing the Transport Decisions. University of Nottingham. Speakers include Neil Kinnock. Details, fax 01223 881604

22-24 April: Traffex 1997 Conference — Challenges for the Millenium, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Details from Lisette Westerhuis on 0181 741 1516, fax 0181 741 5993

25 April: Omnibus Society meeting, LT HQ, 55 Broadway, London SW1. Thomas Knowles, Lancaster Buses. Details from Barry Le Jeune on 0171 918 3295

▼ Coach and Bus

Take bus says RAC

THE RAC is advising its members to use public transport in a bid to cut traffic congestion and pollution in urban areas.

In a major change of tactic, the motoring organisation wants more car drivers to turn to alternative means of transport, including coaches, buses, trains, cycling and walking.

This admission that an improved environment can only follow from less dependence on the private car is thought to have profound implications.

'Green' company formed

A NEW company formed to find environmental solutions to the growing problem of traffic congestion and pollution is the brainchild of former FirstBus Transit Development men, James Freeman and Keith Tazewell. They have set up the Bath-based consultancy, Eco:Transit, to advise local authorities and transport operators on finding ways to overcome environmental problems. Their first assignment was to assist in the launch of a revolutionary new hybrid bus (*CBW*, 8 February). James Freeman says Eco:Transit is particularly interested in alternative fuels, including LPG, CNG, electric and hybrid. There is also the possibility of more futuristic power sources.

▼ Bus

Alexander gets Souter boost

STAGECOACH has taken up options and boosted its 1997 bus order with Alexander to 507, worth £20 million, and its Volvo chassis order to 650, worth £33 million. And, chairman Brian Souter confirmed plans to buy British-built buses for Stagecoach's foreign subsidiaries.

Signing on line: Brian Souter

Announced at a high-profile media event geared to stress the importance of the revitalised bus business to the Scottish economy, the order takes the total number of Alexander-bodied vehicles purchased by Stagecoach to over 2,600.

Earlier Stagecoach had ordered 625 buses with options on a further 250 (*CBW*, 23 November 1996). Now confirmed with Alexander are 177 ALX midis, 170 deckers and 160 PS-type single decks. The rest of the order goes to Plaxton/Northern Counties.

Although Stagecoach-owned Swebus is following its traditional Scandinavian buying policy and is to take two gas turbine/hybrid test vehicles later this year, Stagecoach is looking to capitalise on the benefits of reduced unit costs from a revitalised British bus manufacturing industry.

Mr Souter said: "The key to British companies is overseas, not only the developed traditional markets but also the more difficult European market.

"We want to be part of that in partnership with Volvo and Alexander and we are working out the best way forward," he said.

Quoting the European Directive that public sector services must be out to tender by 1999, Mr Souter said British companies were uniquely placed for European growth. He dismissed political problems and the common currency, saying it's a question of: "Have we got the guts to grasp the opportunity."

He said there was a big advantage for the UK manufacturing industry if it could develop a standard bus for Europe. An Alexander PS type on Volvo B10M for Swebus is one possibility.

▼ Coach

Budd Robi

by Mike Morgan

IN a surprise move Hampshire operator Buddens Coaches of Romsey has bought coachbuilder Robin Hood Vehicle Industries (RHVI) of Eastleigh. The buyout has injected fresh capital as a first move towards expanding output and building up re-trim and conversion business.

Buddens managing director, Simon Budden, says there is more synergy between the 50-coach operator and RHVI than might first appear. He

▼ Coach

Over-50s get NatEx discount

NATIONAL Express is to extend its New Year offer to the over-50s. The offer gives return travel to anywhere in Britain for £9.99.

To qualify, passengers must have a National Express Advantage 50 discount coach card (£8 per annum) and travel can be made on any day except Friday or Sunday with return journeys completed by the end of 20 March.

▼ Bus

New link

FIRSTBUS subsidiary SMT has forged a new express link between West Lothian and the west of Scotland. It is branded West Link and uses high-spec, double-glazed, low-floor vehicles.

The service is a partnership project with West Lothian Council introducing a package of benefits for passengers.

ens buys Hood VI

Operator snaps up coachbuilder

Broader appeal: Buddens buyout injects capital into RH2000 project

said: "We have over the last few years developed our body shop and expanded into vehicle re-trimming and associated work such as installing toilets and upgrading coaches to executive specification.

"A significant amount of this work has been outside customers and it complements similar work being undertaken by RHVI at Eastleigh."

However, RHVI's principal activity is coachbuilding. Its RH2000 body with distinctive lift-up front end has attracted favourable comments for its styling and is now available on the recently-launched Mercedes-Benz Vario chassis.

"The RH2000 is an exciting project," said Mr Budden. "We have orders in hand for this season and are looking to broaden the model's appeal by adding a lower cost specification as an option to the current high spec standard vehicle which features air-conditioning and Webasto heater. With the new specification we will retain the RH2000's quality but at a lower price for operators who do not need items such as air-con."

Buddens was established in 1926 and runs 50 vehicles with an average age of two-and-a-half years. It employs 60 people while RHVI employs 30. Mr Budden confirmed that RHVI would continue to operate from Eastleigh and director Robin Hood has been retained as sales and technical director.

▼ Coach

Former Aston Coaches employees jailed

TWO former employees of the now defunct Aston Coaches tours offshoot Astonways Travel have been jailed for theft.

John McNally, 42, and David Milton, 45, stole tour brochures and poached customer lists to set up their own business.

Milton had previously been sales and marketing manager at Kempsey, Worcester-based Aston's and moved across to Astonways Travel in Lark Hill Worcester, as manager, with McNally reporting to him.

The pair then secretly set up a company called Coaches Abroad, using literature falsely claiming it had ABTA recognition.

Worcester Crown Court was told that the plan cost Aston Coaches £13,700.

Both men admitted three counts of theft and were jailed for four months.

For the prosecution, Jonathan Gosling said that Astonways had made a healthy profit for two years before the two men decided to go it alone.

Milton compiled a list of valuable customers while McNally turned out 144,000 company brochures, 1,000 advertising leaflets with forged details, and 60,000 business reply cards to divert customers to Coaches Abroad.

Mr Gosling said the partners even diverted a school booking to their company, pocketing the £1,162 deposit.

However, their actions were discovered after 10 months through an Astonways customer realising that McNally's mother was manning the office for the pair.

Astonways lost ABTA recognition because of the scam, said Mr Gosling.

Aston Coaches owner Tony Halford later told *CBW* it caused the demise of the company. He said Milton was working as a school housemaster at Old Swinford School where his wife was housemistress. "It was stated by his defence counsellor that he was in charge of a £100,000 budget at the school."

Mr Halford said Astonways business would "probably be absorbed into one of the other tour companies that we run."

CBW

●●● *inside TRANSIT this week* ●●● *inside TRANSIT this week* ●●● *inside TRANSIT this week*

NEWS

STAGECOACH'S groundbreaking agreement with its South West Trains drivers threatens to put a spoke in the wheels of rail privatisation as 70 voluntary redundancies force 14 train cancellations a day.

National Express makes it five as it is named preferred bidder for Central Railways. Providing this and the Scotrail franchise are confirmed the company is on track for £300 million per year turnover from rail alone, making it Britain's premier operator.

Meanwhile, National Express has pledged to replace slam-door stock and improve services for North London Railway.

And, just when you thought National Express's coach and bus interests were being submerged, a flood of acceptances makes unconditional the offer for Taybus by its Travel West Midlands subsidiary.

Improved profitability within the bus industry as a whole has sustained a rise in wage rates says a report by pay analysts Industrial Relations Services. It says pay freezes are less common than a year ago.

Increased fuel costs are blamed by Go-Ahead subsidiary OK Travel for significant route cuts in County Durham.

ANALYSIS

Competition thinking is explained in FirstBus SB Holdings report. Will this be a landmark judgement which sets the tone for the competition authorities as the consolidation of the UK bus industry gathers pace?

Turnover and profit is up at Yorkshire Traction despite fierce local competition.

Take a closer look in our unique profit and loss analysis.

PLUS

All the latest jobs and tenders in the industry. Shouldn't you be getting a copy? Subscribe now. Simply fill out the form on the inside back cover of this issue of *CBW*.

In brief

Tacho fees up

PROPOSED rises in fees for tachograph inspections could result in a 14 per cent increase. The calibration and six-yearly check would cost £37.50 and the two-yearly check £24. The last increase was in 1991 and, if the DoT confirms the proposals, the new rates will apply from 1 April.

M4 PSV lane

A COACH and bus only lane added to the three-lane southbound M4 Heathrow Airport spur road would carry over 1,800 vehicles a day, according to the British Airports Authority. The bus lane is on target for opening in Summer 1997.

Gas station

NORTHAMPTON Transport is to get a new gas station at its St James depot ready for the FirstBus subsidiary's six CNG-powered buses scheduled for delivery in May. It will also be open, by agreement, to natural gas vehicle operators in the area as British Gas improves the supply line in the wake of the 25 per cent duty cut in November's Budget.

Back injuries

WHOLE-body vibration can cause drivers to suffer back injury, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) warns in a new free leaflet, *In the Driving Seat*. HSE says evidence links back problems with vibration or jolting transmitted through drivers' seats into their spines.

Campaign

PARENTS are among motorists advised to Think Before You Travel in a DoT campaign to encourage use of public transport for short trips. Transport secretary Sir George Young is targetting the 60 per cent of car journeys under five miles, including trips to school which account for 16 per cent of peak-time car traffic.

▼ Coach

Sussex operator claims to be first on Internet

Nova Travel advertises on Worldwide Web to market band buses

by Mark Williams

A FOUR-coach operator in Sussex is claiming to be the first to advertise his services on the Internet.

Nova Travel went 'live' this year as part of a drive to market its band buses worldwide. It's proving a shrewd move, generating up to 300 visits to its Website every week.

"So far, it's too early to gauge what business we may get," said Nova's proprietor Peter Davie. "My reasoning is that I'd like to attract more US and European business.

"My site has links with the *Music Week* directory on the Web, and *Music Week* will also include my Website on its new CD-ROM, due to be produced soon. The most important task is to get on to the major search engines, so your site can be found more easily."

Mr Davie's site includes pictures of all four coaches, inside and out, with light details of the company. It will be updated as Nova changes vehicles, which might soon include a double-deck coach.

"I resisted getting double-decks, favouring single-decks so that bands can book separate vehicles for their road crew and management. But it looks like double-decks are what they want, being used on average 270 days as opposed to the 200 days average for a single-decker," Mr Davie told *CBW*.

The four vehicles in the fleet are two, near-new Caetano Algarve IIs, an older Algarve and an unusual DAF Odyssey which was purpose-built as a band bus... purchased second-hand from Len Wright Band Services by Mr Davie, and given a £20,000 facelift.

Take a look inside: Web site gives potential customers details of coach exterior and interior

▼ Coach and Bus

Has your vehicle been cleared on recall?

RECENT manufacturers' recalls include vehicles from Dennis, Berkhof, Toyota and Volvo.

The recalls between July and December 1996 have, in the main, now been completed through dealerships. What they involved is shown in the table below.

Operators of affected vehicles can check they have been cleared on recall by contacting the manufacturer or supplier. CBW

VEHICLE	FAULT	REMEDY
Dennis Javelin July '95 to July '96	Wheel carrier bolts on front hub not tightened to specified torque, with possible detachment of road wheel	Re-torque bolts
Berkhof fitted with Shades Technics hand drier	Misuse of hand drier could result in fire in drier unit	Fitment of external timer and relay
Toyota Optimo '89 to '94	Rotor blades in brake vacuum pump subject to wear and may cause loss of brake vacuum	Replace pump blades and rotor
Volvo B10B, B10L, B10M and Olympian	Fuel injection pump pressure valve retainers, bottom washer may come undone causing valve to drop on pump element. In extreme cases, could prevent engine speed regulation	Replace pressure valve retainers

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▼ Bus

TBP Freeway to be built by Crystals

In production by the Summer

by Mark Williams

Rescued: Freeway II was a casualty when TBP went into liquidation

CRYSTALS has bought the rights to produce TBP's Freeway II low-floor midibus, and is hoping to be in production with it by Summer.

The extraordinary vehicle, which uses the front end of a Peugeot Boxer and a coachbuilt, raised-floor back end, was a casualty when Birmingham-based TBP went into receivership last year (CBW, 8 June,1996).

Newark-based Pathfinder had expected to build the bus for its franchise operation.

However, within months of TBP closing, Crystals was employing TBP's sales manager, Peter Kitt, and the vehicle has followed him into the Crystals stable.

"We feel it has huge potential as a stage carriage vehicle," said Mr Kitt. "At TBP, it had mainly got its reputation as a local authority vehicle, and those who use it are extremely enthusiastic." Crystals' first experience of the vehicle came before buying it, when it was asked to complete two Freeway IIs for Borough of Bromley (*CBW*, 1 February), left in the factory when TBP closed. Despite terrible problems with re-wiring, Crystals' staff finally finished them and felt they would be happy with the design.

The Freeway II uses the much-acclaimed Boxer 2.5 turbo, which has front-wheel drive and an easy-to-use dash-mounted, cable-operated gearshift.

The floor height means it would not gain DPTAC, so TBP engineers set about coach building it to get a single-step entrance.

The stainless steel, 3CR12 chassis members go into the sides of the vehicle, and the rear steps lift the floor over a proprietary German ladder frame and the two-axle suspension, which Mr Kitt says, 'rides like air' though being based on rubber.

"At the moment, wheelchair access is via an underfloor chair-lift at the rear, but we'll be looking at the potential for making the front door accessible, and moving ambulant passengers into the raised, rear section," said Mr Kitt.

Regional Round-up+++Regional Round-up+++Region

▼ East Sussex

Master Rider

EAST Sussex County Council has teamed up with Stagecoach South Coast Buses (left) to offer a free, 13-week Master Rider ticket to council staff in congested Lewes

All the council staff have to do is pledge to use the bus ticket instead of their car to qualify: "This is the first step in a project that I hope will eventually make a big impact in helping to reduce the number of cars on our roads travelling into Lewes," said local councillor Norman Baker.

▼ Derbyshire

Depot plan

CRESSWELLS Coaches has won planning approval for an extension to its Moira depot which will add a sales office and extra workshop space.

The company is restricted to using the sales office only in connection with coach holiday sales, but the consent gives it an extra 200 square feet of depot area in Shortheath Road.

▼ Surrey

On the move

MITCHAM-based Nostalgiabus has moved to a single base from its former, four-site situation.

The London classic bus and coach company saw a 60 per cent increase in turnover in the 12 months to June, 1996, much of which was due to its Summer Surrey Hills leisure bus routes. Its forecast is for a further 60 per cent increase this year... from its expansion into service bus work.

The company says it is now bidding for tendered London Transport work alongside its other operations, but leaving its coach interests at current levels.

▼ Cumbria

Eat and ride

EXPRESS and tour operators running tight schedules are being asked if 'in-transit' meals could solve a problem.

Carlisle company Coach Cuisine sells ready-to-eat trays of fresh food, delivered to the coach as long as the stopping point is nearby. It was a service Coach Cuisine's proprietor, David Common, used to supply to Shearings from Southwaite service area.

The RAF-trained caterer has a purpose-built kitchen and refrigerated van for deliveries from his base at Warwick Mill Business Park, at Warwick-on-Eden.

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Experiments confirmed some ECE/EEC approved belts/seats failed

▼ Coach and Bus

Euro standard belts shock

A LEADING crash centre warns that some seats and seatbelts certified to ECE or EEC standards may fail when fitted to conventional coachbuilt floors.

These startling findings follow work done at the Transport Research Laboratory on behalf of Mellor Coachcraft of Rochdale.

Mellor's seatbelt-fitted midibus bodywork was tested to ECE R14.03 and EEC 76/115 M2 standard. It passed.

However, similar tests are often carried out with seats mounted on a substantial steel slab, not in the vehicle. Mellor says such conditions fail to simulate the considerable deformation as the floor under the seat front mounting is put in tension deflecting upwards.

Technical director Geoff Hudson says conventional thinking about floor design and testing has been turned on its head.

He said: "It's not just the individual components that need to be certified but the whole installation."

▼ Bus

Cuts county

Smack in the face

by Mark Williams

KENT bus operators are accusing the county council of a U-turn on public transport policy as they bear the brunt of a £1.5 million cut in service subsidy... and say more cuts are on the way.

Kent County Council has decided to pull the plug on all evening and Sunday services in Kent (*CBW*, 18 January), removing £0.5 million turnover from Maidstone & District with only a few weeks' notice, and a similar sum from Stagecoach East Kent.

KCC was looking for across-the-board savings amounting to 11 per cent, but the bus subsidies bore the brunt of a total £4 million cut, which was forced on the council by Government spending guidelines.

The result, say operators, is a smack in the face for bus users and a betrayal of policy: "The passengers will be the most disadvantaged," said John Piper, md of M&D's parent group Invictaway, owned by First-Bus.

"I've got to maintain some sort of network, and I'm looking to try to build early evening services commercially - perhaps using low-floor buses to help sell the seats.

"But this comes after a background of two years during which we have worked closely with Kent to develop a public transport

Maidstone & District: a

▼ Coach and Bus

Police crackdown

SCHOOL buses were targeted by Strathclyde Police during a four-week crackdown.

Co-ordinated by the traffic department at Motherwell Police Station, the operation included 45 school buses stopped and examined in one day in the Motherwell, Wishaw, Airdrie and Strathaven areas.

Ten were given immediate prohibitions and a further seven had defects that required immediate attention.

The defects ranged from faulty handbrakes and tyres to emergency exit doors being locked or jammed shut and seats that were insecure. One of the worst cases, according to a police spokesman, involved a bus which had a broken main front spring.

As the multi-agency campaign comes to a close chief inspector Gordon Clydesdale of Strathclyde Police said: "This operation is a continuation of our crackdown on those who are willing to compromise both their own safety and the safety of others, by persisting to use vehicles which are potential deathtraps."

Among the PCVs stopped a number of buses were found to have loose side flaps and some had locked emergency doors.

accused of U-turn

for bus users and a betrayal of policy, say operators

network. For example, the 480 service Dartford-Gravesend has been a tremendous success as a result of working together. Now we have s situation where, after 6pm, there will be no buses running at all. This may also mean that I'll be facing a reduction in staff numbers.

"We have shared an £8.3 million investment in new buses, getting 90 of them and replacing a third of the fleet at a stroke. Now I discover this is the thin end of the wedge, and that another third of bus subsidy is to be withdrawn."

Don Benn, of Fuggles of Benenden, is equally angry, though he has less to lose, and has had capital subsidy for a low-floor route: "What has annoyed me is that the council has been so unhelpful. It was not even prepared to accept a stay of execution to give operators time to plan new services. They have pulled the rug from under our feet after encouraging us to invest."

Total of £0.5 million turnover removed by cuts with only weeks notice

London express service: 'a great success story'

▼ Coach

Oxford celebration

THIS week the Oxford Bus Company launches a year of celebrations to mark the 70th year of regular, daily coach services between Oxford and London.

On Monday 5,000 £1 money-off vouchers were given out in Oxford city centre and every passenger on the 10am coach from Gloucester Green to London paid just 70p return, received a 70th year mug and a slice of cake cut by Go-Ahead managing director Martin Ballinger.

Mr Ballinger said: "The Oxford to London coach service has been one of the great public transport success stories of this century."

The Oxford-London corridor now boasts one of the highest frequency express services in the country with Oxford Bus Company's Citylink service in a head-to-head with Thames Transit's Oxford Tube.

However, it all started on 6 February 1928 at 8.30am when the first 25-seat Lancia coach left Oxford St Aldates for London Marble Arch. The journey via Dorchester and Henley took three hours with a return fare of 10 shillings (50p).

Today the Citylink X90 is operated by 17 coaches and a regular team of 40 drivers providing a 20-minute service - 15 minutes on Saturdays. Fastest journey time is one hour 40 minutes.

▼ Coach and Bus

South Wales TAO closure looming

PLANNED closure of the South Wales Traffic Area office comes into effect on Friday 7 March with transfer of administration to the 11th Floor of Cumberland House, 200 Broad Street, Birmingham. Present South Wales traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh and administrative director Gerry O'Donnel remain but accommodated wholly within the Birmingham office.

▼ Obituary

Former G&G man dies

PETER Griffin, formerly of Leamington Spa-based G&G Coaches, has died after a long illness, aged 64.

Mr Griffin joined the family-owned G&G business in 1957. Prior to selling its bus operation to Western Travel in 1989, the company's fleet had expanded to 40 vehicles.

Western Travel subsequently sold out to Stagecoach and the G&G operations are part of Stagecoach Midland Red.

Mr Griffin leaves his wife, Cynthia and two sons, Philip and Mark.

Both sons maintain strong contacts within the coach and bus industry. Philip runs the Stratford Travel Shop and Mark was with Bus and Coach Training prior to joining Expo Management last year.

▼ Bus

FirstBus backed

FIRSTBUS has attracted heavyweight support in its bid to overturn the MMC ruling that it must sell some of its Scottish operation in return for taking over SB Holdings (*CBW*, 1 February).

It has won backing from chairman of Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority, Charles Gordon, as well as Livingston MP and shadow cabinet member, Robin Cook. Tony Kinder, chairman of West Lothian Council's strategic services committee, also agreed to support the FirstBus case.

▼ Bus

Everyone to have a say on LT's future

LONDON Transport is inviting everyone to have a say in it future. People who live in, work in, or visit London are encouraged to let LT know how bus and Underground services can be improved and what LT's priorities should be in planning for the future.

The consultation process is part of LT's Statement of Strategy which will be published in June and will set out LT's objectives and priorities from 1997 onwards. Questionnaires are available from LT on 0171 918 3488. CBW

▼ Obituary

Supreme boss dies aged 68

RON Bonas, boss of Stoke Heath, Coventry-based Supreme Coaches, has died after a heart attack while on holiday in Kenya, aged 68.

Mr Bonas had been in the business 42 years after setting up Supreme with one coach in 1955.

He named the business Coach Supreme after his father's Foleshill bakery, The Loaf Supreme, and, as the fleet grew to 11 coaches, it was renamed Supreme Coaches.

The fleet was cut back to eight to make it more manageable after Mr Bonas' wife, Ellen, died in 1991.

His daughter, Pat Allen, said: "The coaches were his life. He wasn't just a boss who sat in the office and delegated.

"He never expected any of his drivers to do anything he would not do."

He leaves three daughters, Pat, Christine and Diane, and eight grandchildren.

Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd concluded that repute had been greatly

▼ Coach

Cantabrica has 13 vehicl

Three-month authorisation cut over drivers' hours and

by Michael Jewell

CONVICTIONS for drivers' hours and tachograph offences have led to 13 of the 23 vehicles authorised on Cantabrica Coaches Ltd's O-licence being suspended for three months.

The company, of 146 -148 London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, had appeared at a two-day disciplinary inquiry in January at the end of which Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd had reserved his decision (CBW, 25 January).

It had been called before the commissioner following the conviction of four of its drivers in September 1995 for offences of failing to take sufficient daily and weekly rest, and of the company itself in March 1996 for offences of failing to produce tachograph charts and permitting a driver to fail to take sufficient weekly rest, for which Cantabrica was fined a total of £3,000.

During the hearing reference was made to a statement of a traffic examiner who had travelled on holiday on one of the company's coaches in which he claimed that, on the return journey, the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel three times. The Vehicle Inspectorate claimed to have found other drivers' hours and tachograph offences which were not laid before the magistrates, either because they were out of time or because they had taken place on the Continent where there was no jurisdiction.

A traffic examiner visited the company again in September and October of last year. He found from their records that various offences had been committed on mainland Europe by its drivers, including nine occasions when drivers had driven for longer than the permitted hours without the required 45 minutes break.

For the company, it was said it was before the commissioner because of changes that had taken place in its scheduling in about May 1994, when Cantabrica asked the Confederation of Passenger Transport for advice on how it could make their scheduling more flexible.

The problems over

Informed choice: 'public want to know travel arrangements' says Parrys md Dave Parry

▼ Coach

Ads should

TOUR operators should be forced to declare they don't run their own vehicles, or the coach industry could watch its profits leach away.

That's the view of Dave Parry, md of Parrys International, who says low-quality tour operators damage the image of the industry by booking low-quality coaches, whereas coach operators - with a vested interest in the vehicles - can provide a much better service.

"Companies offering coach tours but leaving the travel arrangements to coach operators leave a lot of things wide open for problems," said Mr Parry. "The driver and crew are a vital part of tour operation and, if they are of poor quality, we

tarnished. Though not lost, it had been a close-run thing

es suspended

achograph convictions

scheduling had now been resolved, and the persons responsible were invited to leave after the second investigation in 1996.

In his decision, Brigadier Boyd said he recognised that the company had a previously exemplary record.

He also accepted it had acted in good faith so far as its reinterpretation of the regulations was concerned after seeking advice from a responsible and professional source.

However, the results of the most recent investigation placed Cantabrica's repute in serious jeopardy.

Weighing everything in the balance, he had concluded that, while its repute had been greatly tarnished, it had not been lost but it had been a close-run thing.

There was, however, overwhelming evidence the company had failed to fulfil its statement of intent to make proper arrangements to ensure the rules on drivers' hours were observed and proper records kept.

There was a penalty to pay for such a dereliction of duty on its part, said the commissioner but one which in this case fell short of revocation, but again that had been a close-run thing.

The reduction in the licence authorisation to 10 vehicles is to run from 24 February until 23 May.

■ **Full report of the commissioner's decision in Legal News next week.**

name operator - Parry

may have lost coach tour holidaymakers for good."

Mr Parry believes advertising should be bound to say which coach operator is being used, so passengers can make an informed choice: "After all, the public would want to know the travel arrangement if a flight was involved."

But top tour operator Leger Travel says Mr Parry's views do not hold water: "In fact, I'd say this is absolute rubbish," said Doug Oxprings, operations manager.

"Is he saying that coach operators have superior vehicles to tour operators? In my experience, the coach operator that has just become a coach tour operator is a bigger problem.

"It's a hard, commercial world and, if tour operators don't sell what the public wants, they don't get the business. Our proof is in our return bookings.

"If we are going to get rid of the problem, we've got to get to the grass routes. It's not an issue of tour or coach operator, we've got to kill the cancer at source. I'm talking about raising the entry standards for the coach industry."

Mr Oxsprings agreed there are no statutory entry standards for tour operation but said that, like coach operators running tours, they are faced with making bonding arrangements. CBW

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The new Vario bus.

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▼ UK and Europe

Rush for marketing workshop

MARKETING is playing an increasingly-important role in coach tourism, which is why there has been a rush to sign up for a seminar in April.

The day-long workshop has been organised by Stephen Rodgers, who has a wealth of experience in the travel and coach tourism industries. Mr Rodgers said that operators needed to be aware of how they can best target markets and adapt products to changing consumer trends. The aim of the seminar is to ensure the correct message gets across and is aimed at the most likely audience.

The Coach Tour Operators Guide to Marketing is at the Forte Posthouse, Coventry, on 14 April. Tickets are £79 plus VAT and include lunch.

Mr Rodgers runs his own company, Stephen Rodgers European Marketing, in Keynsham, near Bristol. He also is the UK representative of the Normandy Tourist Board, which is holding its 1997 Normandy Workshop on 23 April.

The venue is the spa resort of Bagnoles de l'Orne for this biennial event, which comprises a full-day workshop session. It should attract more than 60 coach and tour operators and 150 French hoteliers, attraction and tourist offices.

Operators who have attended previous events know of the proven record of successful business concluded at the event.

Once again, there will be three educational tours, which have been organised by Mr Rodgers in conjunction with the ferry companies. All three tours departed on 21 April and return on 24 or 25 April. Brittany Ferries travels out via St Malo, returning through Caen, while P&O European Ferries will sail in and out of Le Havre. The Stena Line trip will travel via Dieppe and Calais.

Visits, meals and accommodation are provided throughout and included in the workshop registration fee of £35, plus VAT.

Operators who have not yet registered and interest should register for a full information pack by calling the UK office of the Normandy Tourist Board on 0117 986 0386 (fax 0117 986 0379).

▼ Europe

Le Shuttle share back

Over thousand coaches travelled in January

by William Golden

JUST over a thousand coaches travelled on Le Shuttle in January as the Channel Tunnel operator resumed its coach service nearly two months after the disastrous fire in November.

It gave it almost 20 per cent of coach traffic in what is generally regarded as a slack time of year. Le Shuttle now has its new reservations system up and running and staff are confident they will soon be back at pre-fire levels.

The Port of Dover continued to dominate the market, building on the success of last year. More than 4,500 coaches travelled through the port in January, giving Dover almost 80 per cent of the market.

Ramsgate's figure was in double figures, marginally down on 1996 and reflecting the uncertainty over the introduction of fast craft on the routes to Dunkirk and Ostend. Eurotunnel expects all work on repairing the damage in the tunnel to be finished by June, in time for the peak Summer season. The new reservations system means operators can book a specific departure date and their vehicles are processed directly at the Toll Plaza.

This enables customers to buy their duty-free goods before heading through frontier controls to the shuttle. The computerised booking system not only makes travel easier but it also helps busy operators keep abreast of costs.

Not to be outdone, P&O European Ferries is cementing its position as market leader by extending its 24-hour Bonanza excursion fare to 36 hours on the Dover-Calais route.

The special offer is available until 30 June and prices start at £30 return for a minibus and £1 per passenger. The coach tariff is £60 and the charge stays at £1 a passenger. Drivers travel free and there is a supplement for Saturday departures between 1 April and 30 June.

The 24-hour excursion rates are available on the Portsmouth routes to Cherbourg and Le Havre until 31 March, excluding Friday overnight sailings. There are some restrictions on travel on 27 and 28 March.

Operators wanting

Cross-Channel traffic

January 1997

	Coaches	Market Share	+/- January 1996
Dover	4,541	79.1%	-19%
Ramsgate	95	1.7%	-0.2%
Le Shuttle	1,105	19.2%	+19.2%

Operator cashing in his chips

A WEST Country operator is cashing in his chips after an unprecedented demand for a series of 'Try Us and See' days out to Bournemouth.

Clapton Coaches, of Radstock, launched its 1997 holiday programme by offering nine departures for a £6.50 day excursion to Bournemouth, including a meal at Harry Ramsden's.

It may be a quiet time of the year but the response was staggering and Clapton Coaches closed the bookings with 36 coaches and nearly 1,800 passengers.

The idea had been to give customers an opportunity to sample the service and for Clapton Coaches Holidays to "hard sell" to a captive audience. The end result was to increase the operational burden at a time when the drivers had expected to put their feet up.

Steve Lippett, tours director, said: "Operationally, we have been as busy with this promotion as we are in the peak season. I don't think Harry Ramsden's can believe their good fortune either.

"We have been careful to ensure we don't lose sight of the promotional opportunities. However, all departures are being accompanied by sales staff and couriers to make sure as many of these day trippers as possible convert to bigger things."

Bookings are already run at 14 per cent above 1996 levels, which itself saw a 10 per cent increase on the previous year. Tours to Lake Garda are full through to September and other new destinations, such as Little Trains of Austria and Irish Magic, are also selling well.

Clapton Coaches: had staggering response to day trips

For all your tourism and travel ideas see Coach Tours & Excursions. 01733 467048

to 20%

more detail should contact the group reservations department on 0990 980 444.

Further round the coast, Stena Line is gearing up for the introduction of its new HSS superferry on the Harwich-Hook of Holland. The Stena Discovery enters service on 2 June and will cut the crossing time to three hours and 40 minutes.

The superferry has capacity for up to 1,500 people and 375 cars, or a mixture of cars, coaches and lorries. It will operate two return sailings a day. Ferry terminals at both ports are undergoing multi-million pound redevelopments.

Fare's fair: P&O European ferries is extending its Bonanza excursion offer to 36 hours

▼ UK

Book now for seminars at travel fair

OPERATORS planning to attend the British Travel Trade Fair '97 should book their places now for the important seminars running throughout the two days. One, Travel on the Internet - on the Wednesday - already has attracted so many bookings it is being switched to a larger room. The seminar that will have particular relevance for operators is Coaching into the Millennium, on the Thursday afternoon.

Speakers include Roland Pelly, a senior partner with the law firm Pellys, who will talk about Being Aware of Legislation, and Paul Cresswell, commercial and financial director of the A W Group. His talk will be on The Development of the Coach into the 21st Century.

Mr Cresswell will stress that the design of the coach of the future will be influenced by factors such as 'greener' fuels and possible EU legislation to make vehicles accessible for disabled passengers.

He also will argue that customer comfort will improve, with more coaches being climate-controlled. "However, coach tour operators will have to ask themselves if they can afford to offer their customers more sophisticated vehicles by raising prices," added Mr Cresswell. "At the moment, the customer is getting a free ride."

Joining them on the panel is Stephen Moore, sales and marketing director of wholesaler ICT, who will be looking at Wholesaling into the New Century.

Mr Moore will be arguing that more coach operators should consider themselves tour operators. He said: "There is going to be huge growth in short breaks and coach operators need to make sure they take advantage of that potential business." Also on the Thursday, the Tourism Society is holding its third annual Burning Issues in Tourism seminar, while BT's Future Presentation will look at company communications in the future.

British Travel Trade Fair '97 takes place on Wednesday and Thursday, 19 and 20 March, in Hall 9 at the NEC, Birmingham. It is organised by Reed Exhibition Companies on behalf of the England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland Tourist Boards, and the British Tourist Authority.

BRITISH TRAVEL TRADE FAIR '97
19-20 MARCH 1997
NEC BIRMINGHAM

For free tickets call the BTTF hotline on 01926 435843 (fax 01926 451963). All seminars are free but places are limited, so book in advance by calling Rupinder Heir, at Reed, on 0181 910 7961 (fax 0181 910 7879).

CBW

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	5C/41F	Madrid	12C/54F
Athens	17C/63F	Oslo	1F/34F
Berlin	9C/48F	Paris	8C/46F
Brussels	5C/41F	Rome	15C/59F
Dublin	6C/43F	Stockholm	4C/39F
Lisbon	17C/63F	Vienna	15C/59F
Luxembourg	5C/41F	Zurich	10/50F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.43
Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.55
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.72
France	0.52	Portugal	0.46
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48
Greece	0.42	Sweden	0.65
Italy	0.61	Switzerland	0.64

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	18.74Sch/£	Italy	2,639 Lire/£
Belgium	54.94 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.99 Gld/£
Denmark	10.19 K/£	Norway	10.50 NKr/£
Eire	1.0 Punt/£	Portugal	268.40 Es/£
France	8.97 F/£	Spain	225.50 Pta/£
Germany	2.68 DM/£	Sweden	11.88 SKr/£
Greece	419 D/£	Switzerland	2.29 SFr/£

For all your tourism and travel ideas see *Coach Tours & Excursions*. 01733 467048 COACH

▼ Maintenance

Formal warning given

SCOTTISH traffic commissioner Michael Betts has given a formal warning to Hector MacDonald about his future maintenance standards. Mr MacDonald, of 11 West Gerinish, Lochboisdale, South Uist, Outer Hebrides, trading as MacDonald Coaches, of Lochboisdale, appeared at a Benbecula disciplinary inquiry following the issue of a number of prohibition notices and convictions for forging and uttering a false document, in that he had forged two signatures to enable an overdraft facility at the bank to be continued. Representing Mr MacDonald, Duncan MacDonald said his brother was unable to attend the public inquiry as he had recently gone into hospital. Duncan MacDonald said the overdraft facility was not, in fact, used in any event and Mr Betts indicated he was satisfied Mr MacDonald still met the requirements to be of good repute and of appropriate financial standing.

▼ Licensing

Authorisation slashed

PHILIP Dalton's O-licence authorisation has been cut from four vehicles to one, and he has been ordered to repay 20 per cent of the fuel duty rebate grant he had received over the previous three months. In addition, his local service registrations have been cancelled and he has been banned from operating or registering any local services indefinitely.

Mr Dalton, of 33 Ferensway, Hull, who trades as City Traveller, appeared before North Eastern traffic commissioner Keith Waterworth at a Leeds disciplinary inquiry because of maintenance problems and complaints he had not been operating his local services in accordance with their registered particulars. A DoT vehicle examiner detailed a number of prohibitions imposed on Mr Dalton's vehicles because of their poor condition.

Mr Dalton told the commissioner that, because of various problems, he was now only operating one vehicle. His main work was a shuttle service to Manchester Airport. The commissioner had pointed out there had been complaints that passengers had been left standing at the airport but Mr Dalton maintained the passengers had been waiting in the wrong place.

▼ Maintenance

Falcon hearing adjourned

CONSIDERATION of disciplinary action against Falcon Travel Ltd has been adjourned until April by West Midland deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour, to give the company a chance to provide further financial information.

The company, of Unit 14, London Street Trading Estate, London Street, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, had been called to a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry because of concern about its maintenance standards and its financial viability, together with complaints it was still not operating its local services in accordance with their registered particulars.

Last August deputy commissioner Alan Bourlet banned the company from operating two of its seven registered local services, between Birmingham City Centre and Handsworth and the City Centre and Edenhurst Road, after evidence it had not operated them in accordance with their registered particulars (*CBW*, 24 August, 1996.)

He subsequently lifted the ban but ordered the company to repay 20 per cent of the fuel duty rebate grant it had received in the preceding three months, which amounted to £4,428.03 (*CBW*, 5 October, 1996).

In adjourning the proceedings until April, Mr Seymour, who was sitting with a financial assessor appointed by the Department of Transport, said there was currently insufficient financial information on which the assessor could come to any judgement about the company's viability.

▼ Maintenance

Southampton

Citybus: commissioner had cause for concern and will announce his decision at a future date

▼ Drivers' Hours

Tribunal upholds

THE decision of Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts, banning Bellshill bus operator Edward Coakley, trading as E&P Coaches, from operating any registered local services for a year, has been upheld by the Transport Tribunal.

The tribunal said Mr Coakley, of 49 Glenmore Avenue, Bellshill. Lanarkshire, had been operating since 1986 and held a five-vehicle O-licence. In July 1995 he was given a final warning by the commissioner after failing to operate services in accordance with their registered particulars and for operating unregistered services.

He was subsequently called to a further public inquiry after a monitoring exercise between August and October 1995 revealed that 61 out of 86 journeys on seven services were not operating. Those failures were substantially admitted by Mr Coakley. It was said in mitigation before that 21 of the failures to operate were caused by defective vehicles, even though Mr Coakley had two spare vehicles over and above the number of authorised licence discs.

Fourteen journeys had been cut short either because of a decision taken by the driver or because of perceived problems of competition. Fifteen journeys did not run because Mr Coakley and a driver had to give evidence in court.

Mr Coakley had telephoned the Traffic Area Office in advance but had been reminded of his obligations. Two drivers left without notice and Mr Coakley, therefore, did not have enough drivers to cover all his routes. Since his appearance at the previous public inquiry, Mr Coakley had realised he was ovestretched and had taken steps to deregister services. He was still struggling in September and his difficulties were exacerbated in October by a shortage of drivers.

In imposing the ban, the commissioner said he did so because of the frequency of the failings and because he was not convinced Mr Coakley had a reasonable excuse for his conduct.

At the previous public inquiry he had emphasised the responsibilities and requirements of a provider of registered bus services, which were considerable. He had an onus to provide safe buses to the public at the times he had specified. He had to have enough reserve capacity whether in vehicles, staff or alternative sub-contracts, to ensure he met his commitments.

It followed he had to have a managerial system in place to make it all work. He would have expected

City Transport faces action

Examiner found serious braking and steering problems in fleet

by Michael Jewell

MAINTENANCE problems resulted in Southampton City Transport being called before Western deputy traffic commissioner John Robins at a Southampton disciplinary inquiry.

The company, which trades as Citybus, of 226 Portswood Road, Southampton, Hampshire, operates a fleet of 158 vehicles. In addition to considering taking disciplinary action against the licence, the deputy commissioner was considering an application by the company to increase the authorisation on its licence by 13 vehicles.

DoT vehicle examiner Peter Edwards said he had inspected 75 buses over four days, imposing 22 prohibition notices, 10 of which were endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure. Among the defects listed were serious braking and steering problems and on several buses windows had been found to be on the verge of falling out. Many of the faults had been missed during the safety checks carried out by the company.

On other occasions defects had been noted but the company had still failed to take any corrective action. In his opinion, the company's preventative maintenance system had broken down, said Mr Edwards.

Managing director Ian Phillips said the company now only wished an increase in authorisation of six vehicles. Maintenance procedures had been improved, with the period between preventative maintenance inspections being reduced from six weeks to four. Twenty new vehicles had been taken into the fleet, which required less maintenance than the vehicles that they had replaced, and 11 fitters had been sent on a Vehicle Inspectorate training course.

Reserving his decision, which he is to announce in writing at a future date, Mr Robins indicated he did not propose either revoking the company's licence or curtailing the number of vehicles authorised. He said there had been a number of issues raised that gave him cause for concern and he wanted to reflect upon them before announcing his decision.

local services ban decision

Mr Coakley to have made a fundamental reappraisal of his operations, to deregister services if so needed but, meanwhile, to ensure he was fulfilling his commitment.

Some services were deregistered but Mr Coakley knew he must operate them. He must have known his competitors would watch and report on his every move. Mr Coakley had admitted he had deviated from his registered route on a couple of occasions because there was not the passenger requirement to complete the route and he had been unable to demonstrate that early-morning runs he had claimed to have driven, which had been noted as not having operated by monitors, had, in fact, taken place.

Mr Coakley had also admitted bringing into operation a revised terminal point before the due date. Mr Betts concluded that many of the failures were, in fact, a deliberate decision to stop or vary registrations before their authorised dates.

In other circumstances, some of the failings might have appeared trivial and in others it would have been easy to be sympathetic. However, Mr Coakley had been warned in no uncertain manner and yet on five days spread over two months well over half the journeys monitored either failed to run or in some way deviated from the registration.

It was argued before the tribunal that the commissioner had given too little weight to the mitigating circumstances and that his decision had been too severe.

The tribunal said it was unable to find the commissioner had misdirected himself in any way. It did not consider he had taken into account matters that he should not have done, or failed to take into account matters that he ought to have done. The severity of the action to be taken was a matter for the discretion of the commissioner.

It did not consider he had reached a decision that no reasonable commissioner would have reached. The question for the tribunal was not whether they agreed with the order he had made, but whether it had been shown that the commissioner, to whom Parliament had confided the exercise of discretion, plainly got the wrong answer, and it emphasised the word "plainly". In its view, the decision was not plainly wrong.

The tribunal said Mr Coakley had also complained that a complaint made by him against another operator had been treated differently by the commissioner.

It did not feel it could explore that complaint, which would have required evidence not before the commissioner and which appeared to relate to subsequent events. CBW

▼ Maintenance

Increase despite warning

THOUGH warning Hampshire coach operators Mark and Suzanne Thomas about their maintenance standards, Western deputy traffic commissioner John Robins has granted an application to increase their O-licence authorisation from four to six vehicles.

The partners, who trade as Diamond Coach Travel, of 77 Portchester Road, Portchester, Fareham, Hants, appeared at a Southampton public inquiry because of concern over the maintenance of their vehicles. The commissioner directed that the four existing vehicles be presented for fresh MoT tests within four weeks and that a full maintenance and records inspection spot check be carried out by the Vehicle Inspectorate by the end of April.

▼ Maintenance

Partners lose their O-licence

MAINTENANCE problems, and convictions for vehicle excise duty offences, have led to John and Nicholas Elgar's O-licence being revoked. The partners, of The Swan Garage, Inkpen, near Newbury, who trade as Swansdown Coaches, appeared before Western deputy traffic commissioner Air Vice Marshal Ronald Ashford at a Reading disciplinary inquiry.

Air Vice Marshal Ashford said the vehicle excise duty convictions not only raised questions in regard to the good repute of the partners but also about whether they still met the requirement to be of appropriate financial standing.

After hearing evidence from a DoT vehicle examiner about prohibition notices imposed on the firm's vehicles because of their poor condition, Air Vice Marshal Ashford revoked the licence with immediate effect. He said that, though he was making no finding in regard to finance, he was, however, no longer satisfied the partners met the requirement to be of good repute. He refused to delay the implementation of his decision pending an appeal to the Transport Tribunal.

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53 reclining seats (VOGEL), red/orange/yellow moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, tinted side windows with roller blinds, power entrance door with peage window, full SUTRAK air conditioning, carpet to gangway and driver's area, finished red/cream. **M.O.T. JULY 1997**

1990 (January) MERCEDES BENZ 408 Crystals conversion
15 seats, brown striped moquette, luggage racks, finished white/orange brown
M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1994 (May) DENNIS JAVELIN GX 12M PLAXTON PREMIER 3500
53 reclining seats, grey graffiti moquette, courier seat, rear offside continental door, tinted double glazed side windows, curtains, carpets, power entrance door, Telma, finished cream/maroon. **M.O.T. JULY 1997**

1983 (November) BOVA FUTURA FHD
49 reclining seats, grey/red striped moquette, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted double glazed side windows, curtains, TV monitor, wired for video, cool box, water boiler, finished silver/red/blue.
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1985 (February) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE H 12M
50 reclining seats (recent retrim) in Holdsworth Brown moquette, courier seat, rear offside floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows with curtains, power entrance door, finished red/cream.
M.O.T JULY 1997

1989 (February) DENNIS JAVELIN 12M DUPLE 320
51 reclining seats, brown/yellow/orange moquette, rear nearside floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished white/orange/red.
M.O.T. MAY 1997

1993 425 INTEGRAL Powered by Cummins L10 - Full air suspension
53 reclining seats, full soft trim in brown, central continental exit, courier seat, Radio and P.A. tape, finished all white.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1997

1983 (May) LEYLAND TIGER 12M DUPLE CARIBBEAN
46 reclining seats, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, rear offside sunken toilet, continental door, rear servery, tinted double glazed side windows, power entrance door, semi-automatic gearbox, finished cream.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1997

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Drivers' Hours Rules — delays and emergencies

Welcome to the first in a series of articles by road transport lawyer Martin Arthur giving you, the operator, advice on legal matters

ON the road a coach driver can encounter a variety of problems in the course of a journey, interrupting his or her schedule and causing delays. A driver under the EC or AETR rules who exceeds a period of continuous or daily driving as a direct result of an emergency situation may well have a defence to a prosecution, if, without prejudicing road safety, he continues with the journey to reach a suitable stopping place, and similar provisions apply under the domestic code.

EXAMPLES OF DELAYS

MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN

Provided it could be shown the breakdown was directly linked to the driver exceeding his permitted hours, and that road safety was not prejudiced, a mechanical breakdown could be a valid reason for a driver having to depart from the hours rules.

In *Green v Harrison (1979)* RTR 483 a minibus driver set out in his vehicle loaded with passengers on a round trip from Merseyside to York races and back. On the outward journey he was delayed by a punctured tyre on his vehicle. His defence of unavoidable delay failed because he could not show that the delay in the outward part of the journey led directly to the delay in the completion of the journey.

In the particular circumstances the driver did have the opportunity to complete the return journey within his permitted hours if less time had been spent at a cafe and leisure centre.

WEATHER

When severe weather conditions prevailed throughout the country in 1991 the Government exercised its right under the European Community rules to pass legislation giving exemption from the Community drivers' rules and passed similar legislation relating to the domestic code. Both instruments were revoked when weather conditions improved.

On that occasion Parliament clearly recognised the difficulties drivers may face when severe weather conditions arise. It follows that a delay arising from adverse weather would be justification for a driver to exercise his discretion to exceed his hours to reach a suitable stopping place.

TRAFFIC

Unforeseen delays caused by roadworks or accidents could also be justification for a driver to depart from the hours rules.

A difficulty could arise, for example, in the case of long-term roadworks. Transport undertakings are required to organise work in such a way that drivers are able to comply with the regulations. Allowances would need to be made for known problems since the need to depart from the regulations may be known before the start of the journey.

FACTORS KNOWN IN ADVANCE

In Regina v Bird (CJEC) (1966) RTR 49 the question of whether a driver who knew of a reason to depart from the drivers' hours rules before the journey commenced was entitled to rely on the defence of delay or emergency was referred to the European Court of Justice for adjudication.

It was held that the effect of the rules is to give the driver, and not the driver's employer, the possibility of departing from the hours rules. It is intended to apply only to cases where it unexpectedly becomes impossible to comply with the regulations during the course of the journey. The conclusion was, therefore, that a driver is not authorised to derogate from the rules for reasons known before the journey commenced.

REST PERIOD

The defence of unavoidable delay cannot be used to justify a shortened interval of daily rest. *Whitby v Stead (1975)* RTR 169.

RECORDS

It is important that a driver who has been delayed remembers to enter the circumstances on his tachograph or duty roster as soon as possible. This is specifically mentioned in the EC and AETR rules. The fact that a driver had made a contemporaneous note also makes establishing his defence much easier in the event of a prosecution.

SUMMARY

1) The dispensation afforded by the rules applies only to the driver, and not his employer.
2) The situation must have arisen during the journey and not have been known in advance.
3) The driver must be able to show a direct link between the delay/emergency and the need to exceed his permitted hours.
4) Under EC and AETR rules the dispensation is only to the extent necessary to reach a suitable stopping place.
5) The defence does not extend to a shortened daily rest period.
6) The driver must make a written record of the circumstances.

Drivers' hours: a veritable minefield of legislation

If you have a specific legal question relating to coach and bus operations, contact the editor on 01733 467139 or fax 01733 467154

Northumbria — the implications

ALTHOUGH the result of the Northumbria appeal to the Crown Court on the linking of services has been publicised (*CBW*, 1 February), it is a matter with such a great potential to affect almost every operator in the land, not just those running bus services, that I cannot resist the urge to look at the implications.

If it is left unchallenged it could tip the scales in favour of substituting the EU drivers' hours rules for the domestic ones currently permitted for regular services with a route length of 50 km or less. The appeal and the debate on the merits - or otherwise - of this recommendation of the Transport Select Committee have become a tangled web. It is essential that the real issues are separated from the jumble of beliefs - many of which are incorrect.

Why is the Northumbria decision so devastating? The circumstances giving rise to this case were that three registered services, each with a route length of less than 50 km were marketed as a through journey with a common route number. The evidence was that frequently it was the same vehicle and driver that ran the through journey of more than 100 km.

The decision was, in part, based on the evidence that passengers could through-ticket for the three separate legs of this journey. It is ironic that this ability is used against the best interests of operators and passengers at almost the same time as the UK Round Table on Sustainable Development had slammed the industry for allegedly making it difficult for passengers to make connecting journeys.

The court appears to have decided that the ability of a passenger to buy a ticket for a connecting journey made the through journey 'the service' for the purpose of measuring whether or not it is in scope of the EU regulations. I would suggest this is a flawed approach: drivers' hours are about what drivers do, not passengers, for this line of reasoning leads inexorably to the farcical situation that, where a passenger is ticketed through a series of journeys they become one service and thus within scope of the EU rules, even if each part was operated with a different driver. Likewise, the court concluded that, because the same vehicle and driver normally ran the through journey, that made three separate services into one. That, too, seems to be a mistaken view, influenced, no doubt, by the fact the vehicle continued in the same direction. Where the vehicle was going is quite irrelevant because, in drivers' hours terms, it makes no difference whether the driver continues on to a different place or whether he returns to his starting point.

It should not be forgotten that the word 'service' in the context of the EU hours regulations is not restricted to registered or licensed services. It embraces passenger-carrying journeys that are run regularly, including works, home-to-school and playing fields contracts. If doing one after another with the same driver and vehicle makes a string of such contracts a single 'service' with a route length of more than 50 km, there are a lot of coach operators facing prosecution. I am at a loss to grasp what this prosecution set out to achieve. Working outside the EU rules does not mean that there are no rules at all - just a different set of rules better suited to the needs of essentially local and regular work. In contrast the EU rules have been designed to give the controls and flexibility needed for irregular, lengthy and possibly international transport. Although the domestic rules are simpler than those of the EU, the commonly held view that they are less demanding is wrong. For example, the domestic daily rest requirement of 10 hours can be reduced to 8 1/2 hours three times in any week. Utilising split daily rest, the meaningful gap between days of EU work can be reduced to eight - without any weekly limit.

Likewise the domestic requirement for breaks in continuous duty is for 30 minutes after 5 1/2 hours driving or an aggregate of 45 minutes in 8 1/2 hours driving with a 30-minute break after that. In contrast, with appropriate scheduling it is possible under EU rules to do a nine-hour block of continuous driving, split in the middle by just one 15 minute's break. I do not know how we do it, but it does appear we have an urgent need to make opinion formers, MPs, judges and the regulatory authorities understand that, in looking at EU and Domestic driving hours limits it is not a matter of good and bad, hard and easy, relaxed or constrained. It is much more a matter of having rules to match the task.

I have said previously that immense problems would ensue if EU hours controls had to be applied to domestic work. It would create an unimaginable shortage of drivers, with little prospect of recruitment as the earning power of drivers on out-of-scope work would plummet. The need to address this, plus the costs of employing a larger labour force to do the same amount of work would cripple the industry - the ripples of which (great waves more likely) would hit suppliers, tendering authorities and passengers. We do, therefore, need to get them all on our side in any crusade to retain the domestic hours.

There is a much more practical problem too: the very nature of local service operation is such that snap decisions have to be made on deployment of staff and vehicles to maintain services when disruptions are caused by inclement weather, congestion, roadworks, loadings and many so on.

It is, therefore, of monumental importance that drivers, supervisors, inspectors and schedulers have a set of rules that are simple to understand and easy to apply. The EU rules are anything but simple to understand and easy to apply. This alone is reason enough to not make them applicable to things currently done under the domestic rules.

NEWS

▼ Coach and Bus

Judge rules against split route dodge

EC drivers' hours regs cannot be avoided by linked service

Northumbria Motor Services: ordered to pay VI appeal costs of £1,A

THE EC drivers' hours rules cannot be avoided by registering a service in a number of less than 50 km segments, a judge decided at Carlisle Crown Court in a ruling affecting the whole of the bus

by Michael Jewell

Tyne, operated the route with three local service registrations; one between Newcastle and Hexham, one between Hexham and Haltwhistle, A

on the Tay Bridge for a local service in relation to a route between Dundee and Glasgow, and Edinburgh because the service was registered in segments.

Giving judgment in that case,

He pointed out it had frankly admitted the company registered routes in that way device to avoid rules that w have been applicable to a lo distance service.

In the Northumbria

Judge Br

Historic 685 judgment stopped linked services

You've got me all wrong

I HAVE heard of people who teach transport, or who do driver training, being berated by employers and operators for explaining the law on hours rules to drivers. Drivers mistakenly think that, because some things are possible, their employers may demand that they do them. (Like the examples given in the main piece of continuous split daily rest or nine hours driving with 15 minutes break). They then start objecting to doing things they have not been asked to do, or demanding extra wages or allowances to buffer the possibility.

In similar vein, a recent letter in *CBW* was along the lines: "I wouldn't want to work for Marksman because he expects drivers to ...." I deny the charge. I have often made the point that there are many things that are possible under drivers' hours that no one in their right mind would contemplate doing at all, or doing regularly.

It is wrong to presume that, because I explain what can be done, I want to push to the limits all the time myself or recommend others to do so. CBW

CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

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With a little help from us and a little imagination from you - we can get you moving.

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141 Castle Street, Salisbury,
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Home wanted

MUCH to the surprise of a Swiss coach travel and tourism firm it has proved impossible to find a good home for a redundant 40-year-old vintage bus which was used extensively as a show vehicle.

It was originally used in the Zurich (VBZ) city transport operations - and the search has spread to other countries to ensure the bus can be preserved at a nominal price of SwFr 2000 (under £900 thanks to the strength of Sterling).

The new owner will get an 11-metre Saurer type 4 ZP three-door bus with an eight-litre 180 bhp diesel engine.

■ For further details of this rare opportunity contact Tony Semadii, Swiss Partner-Coach Tourism, Santistrasse 19, CH-8134 Adliswil, Switzerland. Tel 00 41 1709 0970 or fax 00 41 1720 2403.

Blind alley...

DESTINATION blind manufacturers, T Norbury & Co, received a strange order before Christmas from Irishman, Philip Napier... a 100-metre long destination blind printed on poster paper.

What kind of bus could this optimistic Irishman be hoping to fit?

Well actually the blind will never see a bus depot as it has ended up at Heathrow Airport.

Fittingly, it is situated beyond passport control as a symbol of the merging of two different cultures in the spelling of the names.

As the manufacturer's Mike Norbury said: "It's not every day a destination blind is created as a work of art."

Not every day a blind is a work of art

You must remember this, as time goes by

SOMEONE, somewhere must remember this little corker of a picture - Miss Salamanca of Blackpool, and admirers.

We're not sure, but the bloke closest the camera looks like Terry Wogan, or perhaps it's just the influence of the Ireland poster behind him. Miss Salamanca looks delightful. We can't imagine who the cartoon character is supposed to be.

It's an old picture, but we note that the ubiquitous weekend in Paris is absolutely inflation-proof. CBW

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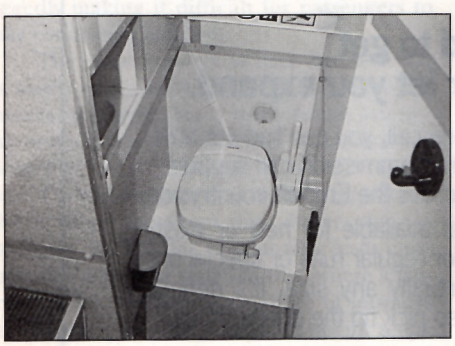

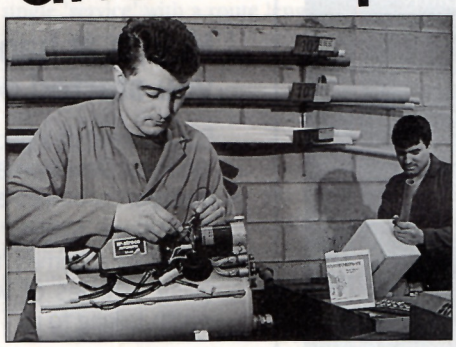

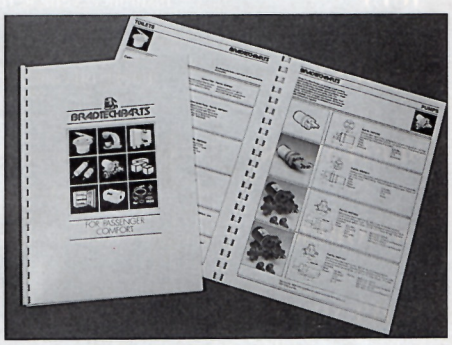

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1991 (H) VOLVO B10M MKIII 273 BHP (TELMA) VAN HOOL ALIZEE
53 seats and crew seat, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side windows, (lap type) seat belts

1990 (G) VOLVO B10M MKIII 273 BHP (TELMA) VAN HOOL ALIZEE
53 seats and crew seat, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side windows, (lap type) seat belts

1992 (J) SCANIA K93CR/273 PLAXTON PREMIERE 3200 *Ref: S/357/C*
53 seats, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side windows, (lap type) seat belts

1994 (M) VOLVO B12R – TELMA – JONCKHEERE MONACO *Ref: V/316/C*
71 seats and crew seat, air conditioning, toilet, servery, video/TV/radio PA cassette, double glazed, alloy wheels, (lap type) seat belts

1989 (PP) MAN 16.290 HOOL (TELMA) – JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE *Ref: M/334/C.*
49 seats and crew seat, centre sunken toilet, servery, fridge, continental door, radio PA cassette, TV, video, double glazed

1992 (J) SETRA TORNADO 215HD
MAN engine, ZF 7 speed gearbox, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, sunken centre toilet, 2 TV monitors and video, radio/PA system, repainted white

1995 (M) SCANIA K113 CENTURY
49 seats, drivers bunk, comfort shift, gearbox, double glazing, radio/PA system, fridge, TV/video, rear sunken toilet, rear continental door

1989 (F & G) LEYLAND TIGER *Ref: L/276/C*
55 seats + 24 standing, livery white, Alexander Belfast service bus body, Cummins L10, ZF automatic gearbox, livery white
Choice of 3

1988 (F) DENNIS JAVELIN DUPLE 320 *Ref: D/385/C*
53 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, brown moquette, power door (one re-moquetted)
Choice of 3

1995 (M) SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE *Ref: S/392/C*
49/53 reclining seats, manual gearbox, livery white, double glazed, centre continental door, centre sunken toilet, radio/PA system, TV/video, 2 monitors, drinks fridge

1990 (G) LEYLAND PLAXTON TIGER 3200 *Ref: L/389/C*
50 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, double glazed, toilet, radio/PA system, drinks servery, white livery

1989 (G) DAF SB2300 VAN HOOL ALIZEE *Ref: D/391/C*
51 reclining seats, double glazed, drivers bunk, centre toilet, radio/PA system 2 X TV's, livery white

1984 (PP) LEYLAND PLAXTON TIGER 3200
49 reclining seats, semi-automatic gearbox, power door, toilet, radio/PA system, TV, drinks, livery white

1992 (J) VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE *Ref: V/351/C*
49 reclining seats, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, ½ rear emergency door, centre continental exit door, radio/PA system, centre mounted toilet, centre servery

1988 (PP) DAF LAG PANORAMIC *Ref: S/332/C/F*
49 recliner seats, 6 speed manual gearbox, livery two tone/white, centre continental door, double glazed, drivers bunk, toilet, radio/PA system, drinks unit, fridge, curtains

1982 (W) SETRA S215H
53 seats + crew seat, rear continental door, drivers bunk, radio/PA system, white livery, interior brown/orange trim

1983 (PP) MAN VAN HOOL ASTRON
57 reclining seats, new Grafitti moquette, twin deck videos, hot drinks machine, fridge, toilet, 3 drivers bunks

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

What antediluvian rubbish

From Ray Stenning

Although sexism regrettably is still rife in this industry, we shouldn't expect to see such a blatant example of it endorsed and encouraged in your editorials. What's all this antediluvian (very old - Ed) rubbish about "a woman's touch" and "pretty in pink".

Let's put the record straight about those Barton Bus interiors (*CBW*, 1 February). When you refer to the interior design, all you are really referring to is the seat moquette. According to my colleagues at Holdsworths that moquette was designed by them, the actual pattern by a man and the specific colourways by a woman. So there! And there is more to interior design than just seat fabric. The rest of the interior is standard functional Plaxton.

Barton is quoted as saying that "traditionally, the interiors of buses have been designed by men with little or no regard to aesthetic appeal." I think he (or she - let me not be accused of sexism!) meant BUSmen, in which case that may be right. How dare this spokesman assume that because he (sic) has no regard to aesthetic appeal all men are the same. And as for trying to "cater for the more artistic nature of women" - just pay attention to the sub text. Listen to your stereotyping. The inference is men are meant to do the butch things in life like driving and using a spanner - they are regular guys that aren't really made for pansy things like design, while the little woman indoors can amuse herself with the pretty things!

Well, let me tell you a few things about men and women and design. Out here in the late 20th century world, there are men designers and there are women designers - good ones too, who have an uphill struggle getting through to traditional busmen that our skill is not just an added value extra, but an essential part of good business sense. And it certainly has nothing to do with gender, colour, race, sexual preference or what you had for breakfast.

There is no extra chromosome or gene, no law of nature, god or mankind that decrees that men should toil in the fields and women do the ironing, nor who should drive a bus, mend a bus, or design a bus. Got it!

Ray Stenning
Best Impressions
London
W12

■ Could you run that past me again? — Ed

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Ltd
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154
e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie, first name and surname), address and telephone number

CORGI CLASSICS

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

IIP: more help needed

From Deirdre Brown

I refer to your article (*CBW*, 18 January) regarding Investors In People (IIP). I agree we need more help and advice dedicated to our industry regarding this standard.

Eddie Brown Tours has been committed to Investors In People since last Summer, but has not shouted about it because, though we are all working hard towards it, like many others, we are finding it very hard work. So, until all our staff, including myself and Philip, get our "heads around" the requirements, we feel it is best not to shout about our commitment until we are confident with its work.

The Training & Enterprise Council (TEC) does help considerably but, as there are so few coach operators in the country who have achieved IIP, there is very little specific expertise available in our TEC.

Eddie Brown Tours
Helperby
York

Aspirational scheme

From Dennis Noble

I was interested to see the comments of Marksman on the potential of a quality mark for coaching (*CBW*, 8 February). As the chairman of CPT's Coach Commission, I have steered the development of a scheme I believe would be aspirational to the majority of CPT members.

The principles of the scheme will be to measure minimum standards of the business as a whole under three headings of vehicle, people, and business infrastructure. Operators will need to provide evidence of commitment to safety, training and customer care, among other criteria. These minimum criteria will demonstrate a company's commitment to providing a quality product as a whole which, in turn would derive benefits by way of increased business and better margins.

In many businesses, in particular the customer service sector, striving for quality and marking this in some way is now the norm, and it seems inconceivable the coaching industry should not follow this route.

Yes, we do have to get the message across to the public, and yes, it will cost, but surely the industry must look to work to improve the product and that is all too often sold on price alone.

Dennis Noble
(Weirs Tours, Clydebank)
Chairman, Coach Commission
CPT UK
London WC2

Thanks to the crew

From Joseph Rose

I have been taking your magazine for a number of years on behalf of my small organisation and have always had a great interest in coach travel and the background and legislation affecting it.

Over Christmas and the New Year I decided to take advantage of a very competitively-priced coach trip to Salou run by International Group Travel of Shenstone, Staffs. It was very well run with an excellent hotel in Salou with a high standard and range of meals at full board and all excursions inclusive.

This, together with an excellent crew, made for a good holiday. All went well until the return journey, when we hit heavy snowfalls and thick ice between Orange and Lyon. Combined with the sheer awkwardness of the French Gendarmerie, this caused us to be delayed on the motorway for some 12 hours.

Eventually the French Police released private cars followed by French and German coaches, not us. I was horrified and so was our crew.

They had been great all through the trip, now they excelled themselves. Anne, our courier, looked after the passengers with a great deal of consideration.

This letter is about the high standard of our road crew and the very high professional standards of our drivers from 'Robin Hood'. My heartfelt thanks to the three of you. One small point, the legroom was a bit tight on our Scania/Van Hool Alizee 49 seater.

Joseph Rose
Coventry
West Midlands

HIGH QUALITY LOW MILEAGE COACHES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1995 M EOS 90 49R, toilet, air conditioning
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Van Hool Alizee 'H' 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 55R
1994 L EOS 90 49R, toilet
1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder, Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SM230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R Toilet
1992 J DAF SB2305 Duple 340, 57R
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet

BUSES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1996 N DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF DB250 Auto, Northern Counties Palatine II, 77 str double deck bus
1995 M DENNIS DART Auto, 10M, Plaxton Pointer, 40 str bus
1992 J DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus Citibus, 48 str bus

1992 J DAF MB230 LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H'
1990 G DAF SB3000 Van Hool 'H', 49/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH' 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51r/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500 , 52R
1989 F DAF MB 230LB Plaxton, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

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1995 M MERCEDES 709, Autobus Classique, 25 str, bus seats
1993 K MAN, Jonckheere Deauville, 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB2700 HS, Caetano Algarve, 53R
1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
1990 (G) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH,51R/toilet, air con
1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
1989 G SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 49R/ Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/ Toilet
1989 (F) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH, 51R/toilet, air con
1989 (F) VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee H, 53R
1989 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1989 SB3000 Plaxton 3500, 51/Toilet
1988 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1988 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1988 E SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH 49R/Toilet
1987 E DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500, 53R, air conditioned
1987 D DAF 2300 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 49R/Toilet
1987 D DAF SB 230LB Duple 340, 53R
1987 D VAN HOOL T815 51/toilet

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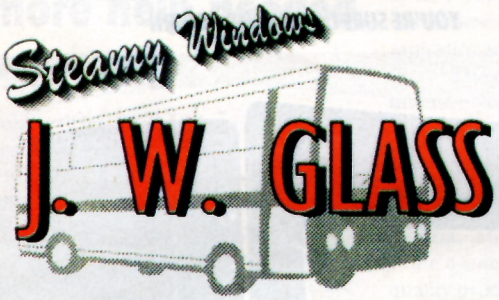

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As the low-floor revolution marches forward there's one sector crying out for improved access - the minibus. Mike Morgan tests Marshall's innovative solution

Style and innovation: Marshall Minibus brings low-floor to small-bus sector

The bus now waiting...

TAKE a train ride to the beautiful city of Chester and as you leave the magnificent station building waiting in the forecourt will be the best image of the modern British bus. New, stylish, low-floor stepless entrance, ramp for wheelchairs or buggies, wide entrance and bright attractive interior. And it runs on clean diesel.

As little as two years ago this would have been a transport planner's dream - the passenger-friendly bus accessible to all and ready to whisk people from the rail-head to the city centre with the minimum of fuss. It's the vision of public transport providing the perfect solution to our environmental and congestion ills.

But it is happening now thanks to support from the county council and the rail-operating companies... and the availability of a product of the right size from Marshall of Cambridge. It's the stainless steel framed, four-cylinder engined Minibus, with a claimed 25-year life.

Chester City Transport won the tender for the City-Rail link service largely on choice of vehicle. Its winning package included the 29-seat Marshall and low-emission City Diesel. By integrating runs from its existing network the high-frequency service could be operated by one bus rather than two as first envisaged for the 12-minute head-way.

However, caution dictated that two Minibuses should be ordered once managing director David Clark and his team were sold on the concept when the revolu-tionary 'small big bus' was unveiled at the NEC in October 1995.

They were in search of a replacement for the 11 Dodge minis in the fleet anyway. Prior to seeing Marshall's new offering emerge from its dry ice launch they approached the show conscious of future legislative changes but with no fixed ideas.

Good looking - some would even venture to say, pretty - the Mini stole the show. Their conclusion as voiced by traffic superintendent John Lee was: "It's got tremen-dous potential. If they've got it right it's the next 'Dart' success story."

Its engineering credentials held no fears - Cummins engine, Allison gearbox - and Marshall has a respected his-

▶▶▶

EXCLUSIVE FIRST TEST

tory of bus building expertise. Nevertheless, they knew the risks of pioneering a new design. There's many a slip between drawing board and bus stop.

Revisit Chester when the cold February winds are gusting up the Dee Estuary and you are likely to confront one of those irritations which challenge the trail-blazers.

Although the exhaust is clean, the location of the engine is no mystery as it chatters to itself with such clarity that intending passengers can count the piston strokes on tick-over. It's a warning to travel in the front of the bus away from the 82 dB(A) clatter when on the move. And the Minibus is cold. So cold that the driver is likely to seek an early end to his discomfort and swing the 8.5-metre machine round the station's mini-roundabout and return smartly to the nearby depot for a change-over.

In fact, changeovers and days off the road have become a common occurrence since the duo hit the historic streets last September, forcing Chester to confess: "There have been problems," though the vast majority tend to be electrical. The pale green dedicated rail-link vehicle has had a new "box of tricks" but both await changes which move critical switches away from their exposed position behind the rear wheelarch.

Engineering director Malcolm Ridge confirms that mods needed include: compressor pipe brackets, fuel pipe brackets and rear suspension bushes. Knocking from the rear end upsets passengers but chaffed pipes affect reliability.

Some modifications have followed as the manufacturer has responded to the lessons of operational experience. Pioneer Chester expected to be at the bottom of a sharp learning curve and, as other operators followed in Chester's wake, they clearly had high expectations of the Mini's abilities. It was time for an in-service *CBW* road test.

Build

Marshall is claiming a UK first for the construction of this bus. Chassis and body structure is in stainless steel, supplied by Krupps of Germany under the Nirosta 4003 brand name and with an expected - but as yet not guaranteed - anti-corrosion life of at least 25 years.

Alloy and GRP panels are bonded and rivetted in position over the body frame.

Running gear is four-cylinder 135 bhp Cummins B series diesel driving through an Allison AT542 four-speed automatic gearbox. Front axle is GKN's low-floor forged I beam unit. Priced at around £60,000 and with several innovative design features, the Minibus takes all the ingredients of the highly-successful midibus market and takes them down a size. Indeed, with maximum seating at 29 passengers, it has upped the stakes at the bottom end of the midi-sector by offering a fully built-up, low-floor integral.

Marshall took just 18 months to get off the drawing board and into the NEC and readily acknowledges the contribution of its various parts of the sprawling engineering group, including experience from its aerospace division to carry out finite stress analysis.

There was input from the Bedford truck-making operation on the engineering and it was designed and built by Marshall Bus Division.

Ground to first step is 320 mm, which lowers to 250 mm when the handbrake is applied. Yes, every time the handbrake goes on the Minibus sits down. - a good idea when loading/unloading passengers but a bit odd at traffic lights and decidedly inconvenient in the workshop. There's a Passenger Lift Services manual folding ramp for those occasions when 250 mm is too high. While this ramp is protected by an electro-magnetic interlock and is easy to use, the operation requires the driver to vacate the cab (and the loose-change), taking valuable time on a tightly timed schedule.

The interior floor is flat through the 800 mm throat until just before the rear axle. Chester elected to forego dedicated wheelchair space and has 12 seats accessible from

Easy access: manual ramp and suspension lowers when handbrake is applied

Above: the best image of the modern British bus... and it runs on clean diesel

the low floor area. It also declined the rearward facing baby seat which Marshall offers — preference given to luggage pens over the front wheelarches.

Transmatic lighting and blown ducted heating and ventilation are incorporated in the coving, the theory being that hot or cold air is forced down over the side windows, eliminating condensation on the gasket-glazed side windows, allowing the floor to be as uncluttered as possible.

This theory, assuming you accept that hot air can be forced down to foot level, has yet to be proved on the Minibus for one simple reason - the engine rarely gets hot enough because the belt-driven engine cooling fan is too efficient.

Passenger impressions

That the Minibus is, as its somewhat prosaic name implies, a small bus is evident from its dimensions. Yet passenger reaction lifts it above a simple replacement for a minibus in the generally accepted use of the term.

For this *CBW* test we took the Marshall on a part-day minibus duty using one of the pair in Chester livery - bus number 49 - leaving the dedicated number 50 to its oscillations twixt station and city centre.

Nevertheless, the allotted diagram comprised a series of short bursts from the city's bus station out to several housing areas with the usual proliferation of narrow roads, parked cars and all the other obstructions which call for a vehicle with minibus type manoeuvrability. Along the main road section conventional bus stops are observed - elsewhere it's hail and ride.

High-frequency is the order of the day, with passengers on the bus for very short periods. Little chance for them to react to the vehicle before it was time to disembark.

Considering this is the only bus of its type on Chester's minibus network, it ought to stand out as something completely different. Consequently there were frequent com-

There is a small number of seats in the low-floor area before two 200mm steps

ments to that effect — but few about the low-floor characteristics, which is strange when compared with experiences with other low-floor buses.

One explanation for this could be the small number of seats in the low-floor area before passengers have to negotiate the two 200mm steps up to the rear seating area. Another could be the black/yellow chevron repeated on step edge and part way into the entrance on the inside edge of the folding ramp. For many passengers, particularly the elderly, it represented another step - even though the entrance was flat.

Ride quality is very pleasant and must make a very welcome contrast with van-derived minibuses. In fact, when assessed from the driver's cab the suspension is very well sorted and the feedback from the passengers is that the bus buzzes about its business in an effective customer-friendly manner.

However, there's a trap for the unwary when it comes to disembarking. Beware that the driver may have failed to master the very sensitive footbrake and the two-leaf doors swing open with considerable velocity such that there can be a rude interruption to the passenger's natural inclination to move forwards just as the bus is stopping.

'As a tool for the job for which it was designed it has a lot going for it. The concept is right and the execution full of potential'

Lethargic despite GT pretentions

Driving impressions

Although it doesn't take long for the driver to become familiar with the Minibus and the controls are conventional, it does have characteristics all of its own.

Brake sensitivity can be a matter of personal preference but it is important that pedal feel should inspire confidence so that a smooth ride can complement the easy-access features. As already noted, the Minibus brakes can be over sensitive and it is on first touching the pedal where the reaction of Telma and foundation brakes is difficult to master.

Then there's the steering. Having taken a wheel that wouldn't be out of place in the GT version of any popular saloon car, Marshall gives a hint of lively performance.

The reality is a bus that is less nimble than could be expected of its specification. There's some adjustment but the wheel is low and close to the driver's knees. Coupled to heavy power-assistance the steering has insufficient sensitivity. Consequently negotiating parked car-chicanes is more chore than pleasure.

While the driveline packaging gives an uncluttered interior, the use of four-cylinder engine raised some eyebrows when the Minibus was launched. It is about the same capacity as the unit in Toyota's Optimo IV with similar power output but around 50 per cent more torque. Which is just as well since the GVW of the Minibus is 9,200 kg compared with the Optimo's 6,300 kg.

Whereas the Optimo is lively the Minibus is lethargic. Exits into fast traffic streams need careful judgement because acceleration is slow until the turbo kicks in. Marshall claims maximum road speed is 56 mph. During this test 42 mph was the limit and during a final run out to Waverton the accelerator needed to be pumped to generate modest speed.

Economy ought to be a minibus virtue. Chester's Dodges return between 12.5 and 14 mpg, its Dennis Darts a consistent 10 mpg. The Marshall Minibuses are recording 8.6 and 8.8 mpg. Note that the Marshall is 6,050 kg - heavier than Plaxton-bodied Darts in the fleet.

Verdict

Despite these comparisons the drivers at Chester have few complaints. The Marshall is a pleasant bus to work with. The cab at least is warm. Though some say it is narrow, the controls fall to hand easily and the interface between driver and passenger is good. The driver is at the right height and ticket machine/cash tray can be operated without stretching. Given a choice between a Dodge and a Minibus there is no doubt which will be preferred. The latter has a comfortable modern working environment.

As a tool for the job for which it was designed it has a lot going for it. The concept is right and the execution full of potential. Once Marshall has responded to those teething troubles and helped Chester to the top of that learning curve it will have a vehicle that will take some beating. CBW

SPECIFICATION

VEHICLE

Marshall Mini - 29 seats plus 14 standing
Price: £60,000
Engine: Cummins Euro 2 four-cylinder turbocharged diesel
Power: 133 bhp (99 kW) @ 2,500 rpm
Capacity: 3.9 litre
Torque: 327 Lbf ft (444 Nm) @ 1,700 rpm
Gearbox: Allison AT545 automatic
Steering: Integral power assisted with adjustable column
Brakes: air/hydraulic dual-circuit system
Ventilated discs on both axles
Handbrake - spring actuators on rear wheels
Retarder: Telma F5750 electric focal-mounted on rear axle and controlled by footbrake pedal movement
Suspension: Hendrickson air system double-acting front and rear shock absorbers
Front Axle: GKN low-floor forged I beam unit
Tyres: 235/75R 17.5

It doesn't take long to become familiar with the Minibus

DIMENSIONS

Length: 8.5 metres
Width: 2.4 metres
Height: 2.89 metres
Wheelbase: 3.94 metres
Unladen weight: 6,040 kg
GVW: 9,200 kg

PERFORMANCE

Test consumption: 8.6-8.8 mpg
Noise levels at 40 mph: front - 76 dB(A), rear - 82 dB(A)

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PLAXTON

New Premiere marks 100 years of Bassetts

Flexible spec will allow operator to use vehicle for growing private hire business as well as on holiday tours

by Mike Morgan

BASSETTS Coachways of Tittensor, Stoke-on-Trent, is spearheading an extension of its holiday tours programme with its introduction of new tours to Spain and to Austria.

And, as the family-owned business, which started with haulage, enters it centenary year, it has a new Plaxton Premiere-bodied Volvo B10M - the second of two similar coaches delivered in the last six months.

"This year we are running a more extensive holiday programme," said director Ashley Bassett, "and I'm pleased to say we've had a very encouraging response to the new destinations which we have introduced."

Both the company's new Premieres are fitted out as 49/53 seaters with a demountable centre toilet, but can also be run as 37-seat executive coaches, complete with tables and servery.

"We wanted flexibility in the specification to allow us to use the coaches for our growing private hire business, as well as on holiday tours and for existing private hire clients," said Ashley Bassett. "With our widely-publicised commitment to quality, our expanded holiday programme, and two new coaches we are aiming to further raise the company's profile in 1997."

Bassetts was the first British coach operator to obtain BS5750 and this accreditation has been upgraded to BS EN ISO9002 standard.

OPTARE

It's Excel time at Timeline

LANCASHIRE-BASED Timeline Travel has purchased its first low-floor Optare Excel for its Shropshire operations based at Shifnal. The 10.7-metre vehicle operates a secured contract on the 822 service from Telford to Roden via High Ercall, and is the first Excel in regular use on country services, where not all bus stops have kerbs.

The Excel has 32 fixed seats, six tip-up seats which can give way to two wheelchairs, and can carry up to 32 standing passengers. In addition it carries a manual Unwin wheelchair ramp.

The five-year contract to provide all day services on the route for Shropshire County Council was won from Cowie subsidiary Midland Red North, which had taken it over from King Offa Travel, but the service had originally been provided by Shearings and its successor Timeline.

Timeline md Ian Longworth said his experience of low-floors in Greater Manchester had shown the vehicles generated more business. "These are still early days but the vehicle has settled in well and has won favourable comments from passengers and drivers." At present, the Excel is crewed by three drivers from the rural drivers rota.

WRIGHTS

Endurances

KEIGHLEY & District Travel has further enhanced its high-quality Star Bus services between Skipton and Keighley with five Wright Endurances - the new standard 12-metre single-deck bus for Blazefield Holdings' fleets in Yorkshire and Hertfordshire.

Built on Volvo B10B chassis, the Keighley & District Endurances have 47 Callow & Maddox Urban 6 seats and, along with four similar vehicles, they complete the latest phase of the continuing modernisation of Blazefield's three Yorkshire bus fleets.

Three 49-seat Wright Endurances were delivered in December to Harrogate & District fleet for its trunk route from Leeds to Ripon, and Yorkshire Coastliner is using another 49 seater, fitted additionally with overhead luggage racks, on the high-mileage Leeds to Whitby service. To provide additional daylight illumination, all nine buses have three translucent ceiling hatches which can be opened to provide extra ventilation.

Yorkshire Coastline bought five similar vehicles last Spring and Blazefield's chairman, Giles Fearnley, says their performance - and that of 10 others in the Sover-

trailblazing in Yorks

eign Buses fleet in Hertfordshire - persuaded the group to buy the Wright Endurance this time. "We are convinced that good-looking, modern buses help our business to grow as they are less expensive to operate and they attract more customers," says Mr Fearnley.

"The Wright Endurance is particularly well suited to our needs. The bolted aluminium structure is very well built, yet accident damage can also be repaired quickly and easily. We also appreciate the attention to detail design and the styling of the Endurance as we have found that the combination of aesthetically attractive buses and bold liveries encourages more people to use our services," he said.

OPTARE

Forty-MetroRider order

COWIE Group subsidiary North East Bus of Darlington is currently taking delivery of its largest order of minibuses since 1986, and is hoping to replace virtually 80 per cent of its minibus fleet which consists mainly of 20-seater Mercedes-Benz 608Ds and 25-seat Dodge S56s.

Forty Optare MetroRider 4s will be mainly allocated to United Automobile subsidiary at Darlington for its three key town services, but five will soon be delivered to the Tees & District company where two will operate Whitby Clipper services and three will run on Loftus local services.

Of the 35 United vehicles 27 will operate in Darlington, three at Bishop Auckland and five at Richmond. These will join the first five MetroRiders purchased in 1994. In all, over 50 per cent of the vehicles in the former United fleets will be of Optare manufacture.

NEB's commercial manager Mike Barber said the company was maximising its £2.2 million investment by dedicated route branding which is raising the profile of the vehicles and services and creating greater loyalty from passengers.

"Our staff are going through customer care seminars, as part of our total commitment to upgrading local services in the area," he said.

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1985, 49/53 Vogel recliners, toilet, boiler, R/C/PA, Centre Door, Courier, MoT till May '97, good condition
£21,000 + VAT

MERCEDES 0303 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA
49 recliners, R/C/PA, boiler, wired for TV/Video, MoT till Oct '97, good runner
£16,000 + VAT

TOYOTA OPTIMO
1990, 21 seats, R/C/PA, Courier, recent engine rebuild, MoT till May '97. Quantity of spares with this vehicle
£16,500 + VAT

Tel: 0181 472 5954
67984/CM

VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL
1986. Private plate.
50 recliners, with rear toilet, water boiler, Telma, TV and video.
MoT April '98
Part exchange considered
01475 783399 or 01475 744233
(SCOTLAND)
67971/CM

1985 DAF SB PLAXTON 3200. 53 E-type seats, MoT July '97.

1985 LEYLAND PLAXTON 3500. 49 Vogel seats, rear toilet, continental door, coffee units, New MoT.

1987 DAF SB PLAXTON 3200 Mk III. 57 seats, MoT August '97.

PART EXCHANGE
Late Bova Futura required
All Offers considered

CLAYTONS of LEICESTER
Tel: 0116 2739818
67979/CM

1990 (G) PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 Volvo B10M. 53 seats + courier seat, MoT till Jan '98 **£74,500 + VAT**

1990 (G) VAN HOOL ALIZEE DAF SB2300, 51 seats, centre sunken toilet, TV/video, Sutrak air con, MoT till Feb '98 **£79,500 + VAT**

1990 (H) CAETANO ALGARVE Volvo B10M. 53 seats + courier seat, Sutrak air con. MoT till Sept '97 **£78,000 + VAT**

67959/CM

Tel: 0181 808 2000/6446

DAF SB2300, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
1985, MoT Aug 97, tax June 97, 55 seats with seatbelts, radio/cassette/PA, curtains, good condition.
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Tel: 0181 531 7854
68662/CM

1987 BEDFORD YNV DUPLE 320L
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1991 MAN 16.290 Jonckheere Deauville
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ONE SETRA TORNADO S 215 HD, 1993, 12 metre, 36 Amviente seats, air conditioning, rear floor level toilet and kitchen servery inc., tea, coffee and fridge. Flotex carpet throughout.

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1982 DAF MB200 JONCKHEERE, 53 r/seats, MoT 2/98 **£14,500**

1984 DAF MB200 JONCKHEERE, 49 r/seats, wc, video, h/drinks **£29,950**

1976 LEOPARD PLAXTON EXPRESS, 53 seats, owned from new, MoT 9/97 **£2,900**

Tel: 0117 955 7130
68036/CM

BEDFORD YMT MOSELEY CONTINENTAL
53 seats, MoT April '97
£2900 ono
Very good condition inside and out. Painted white.
Tel: 01444 244788
66588/CM

TOYOTA OPTIMO
1990 (H reg)
18 seats + large boot.
Very tidy condition inside and out.
Taxed and tested.
Lot of money spent on this vehicle.
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01977 552980/557823
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BOVA EUROPA. 1984, 49 seats, toilet, hot drinks, PP, carpets, curtains, clean, straight and tidy outside, retrimmed inside 2 years ago, new clutch and recon gearbox.....**£20,000**

1980 VOLVO B58 MOSELEY UNICAR. 55 seats, 12 months MoT, PP, seatbelts, good interior, with curtains.....**£10,000**

1977 BRISTOL VR, ECW, 74 seat double deck, MoT Dec '97.....**£4,500**

1977 BRISTOL VR, ECW, requires engine.

All the above + VAT ono

Tel: 01548 853081
68667/CM

1990 DENNIS DART, Carlyle body, 36 seater, 15 standing, MoT Aug '97, 9m length **£34,500 + VAT**

1991 DENNIS DART, Carlyle body, 40 seater, 17 standing, 10m length, MoT Dec '97 **£39,500 + VAT**

1989 LAG PANORAMIC, 49-53 seater, lap belts, MoT Feb '98 **£52,500 + VAT**

Tel: 01703 663700
68670/CM

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Part exchange considered

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1989 FORD TRANSIT DORMOBILE, 20 seater bus, white, clean and tidy, MoT August 1977.

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Nov 1987, private plate.
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MoT Nov 1997
Excellent condition throughout
£52,500 + VAT ono
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49 seat executive.
Toilet, video, fridge, hot drinks, boiler and all usual Bova extras.
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66602/DAF

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DAF SB2300
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1985
MoT Aug '97, tax June '97, 55 seats with seatbelts, radio/PA/cassette, curtains, good condition
68663/DAF
£24,500 + VAT ono
Tel: 0181 531 7854

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DAF MB230
Van Hool Alizee H
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MoT Nov 1997
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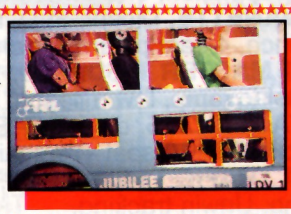

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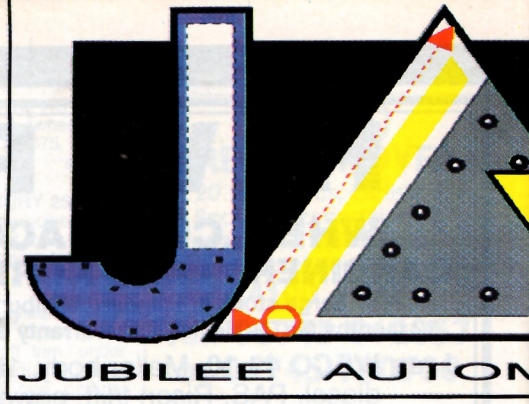

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1988 DAF MD230 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, crew seat, rear continental door, sunken toilet, hot water boiler, radio/tape/PA, ferry lift, splitter gearbox, drivers bunk, interior grey/red, exterior white/orange/light grey, MoT 22/12/97 ..... **£49,500**
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1991 J IVECO 4910 Mellor coach built, 12 seats/6 wheelchairs, MoT Oct '97.
1991 H TOYOTA OPTIMO MKII, 17/21 seats, demountable toilet, 130,000 miles, MoT May '97
1990 H MERCEDES 811D, PMT, AMI, coach built, 33 seats, luggage racks, power door, radio, white/red, exterior, long MoT.
1989 G IVECO 49.10 Robin Hood, 23/25 seats, luggage pen, power door, choice of 5.
1987 E OPTARE CITYPACER 2.5 TURBO, 25 coach seats, power door, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1985 B LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE LASER II, semi auto, 53 seats, power door, long MoT.
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1993 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PREMIERE 350, 49/53 reclining seats, courier, auto transmission, ZF HP 600, centre demountable toilet, boiler/fridge, double glazing, ABS, Sutrak air conditioning, radio/PA etc, immaculate.....**£112,500**

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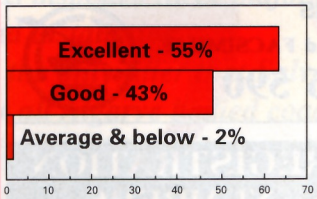

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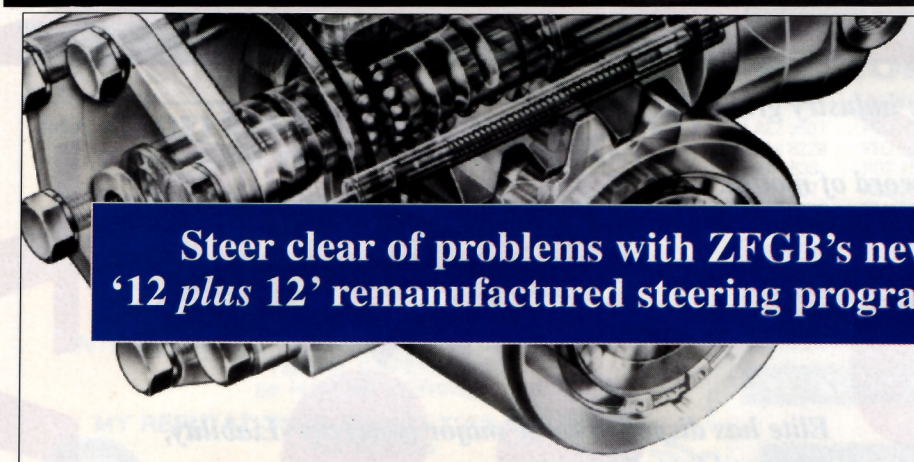

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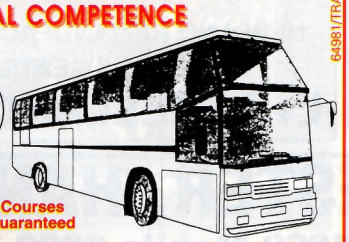

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Drew Wilson, Managing Director, Wilsons Coaches Ltd.
Medwyn Garage. Peebles Rd, Carnwath, Lanarkshire, ML11 8HU

All applications will be dealt with the strictest confidence. 66633/AP

JOHNSONS COACH TRAVEL REQUIRE A CHIEF ENGINEER

To manage the maintenance of our 40 vehicle fleet in the West Midlands. We are looking for a self-motivated person to become a member of our senior management team and who will be totally committed to the companies' high standards of quality and service.

The successful candidate will ensure than the highest standards of vehicle road-worthiness are achieved through the effective management of manpower and spares. Therefore the individual must have a sound knowledge of vehicle certification, V.I. inspection standards and proven organisation, management, team building and leadership skills.

Salary is negotiable but rest assured that your dedication will be rewarded with a highly competitive salary and other benefits.

Applications please in writing enclosing your CV to:-
Mr P Johnson (Director). Johnsons Coach Travel,
32 High St. Henley-in-Arden, Solihull, West Midlands, B95 5AN.

Closing Date: Monday 10th March 1997. 66635/APP

FULL-TIME GROUP SALES PERSON

Required to develop and expand existing and new business.
Experience in coach or travel industry would be a great advantage

FULL-TIME ASSISTANT TRAFFIC MANAGER

Required in Operational Department of a busy Traffic Office.
Must be enthusiastic and flexible in outlook and approach.

Salaries via negotiation.

Apply initially in writing giving brief details to:

HARDINGS COACHES

Tanners Croft Garage, Evesham Road, Crabbs Cross, Redditch B97 5HL

66623/APP

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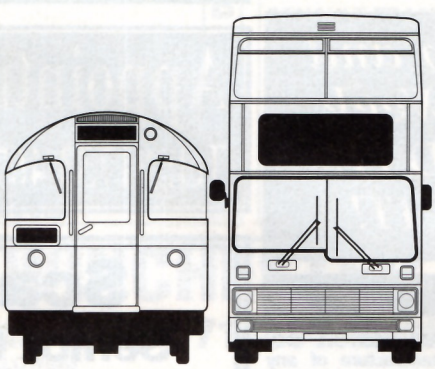
provides you with the ideal opportunity to reach every section of personnel within the Coach and Bus industry. Take the time and effort out of recruiting by calling us now on

01733 467144

London Transport Buses

Rail replacement bus services

London Transport Buses is seeking expressions of interest from bus and coach operators who would be specifically interested in submitting tenders for the operation of London Underground rail replacement bus service contracts.



If you are interested and have already submitted pre-qualification documents for LTB's main bus service tendering programme then you need take no further action at this stage.

However, if you are interested in operating either rail replacement bus services in cases of emergency and/or short term rail replacement bus service contracts (typically weekend closures) and have not completed London Transport's pre-qualification system for bus service tendering, then you must contact us at the address below in order to receive further information on qualifying for rail replacement bus service tenders by Friday 7 March 1997.
You will then be asked to supply certain information about your company by Friday 21 March 1997.

Information is available by contacting:

Mr T Wynne, Buyer
London Transport Buses – Procurement
172 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9TN
Telephone 0171 918 3812 Fax 0171 918 3840

London Transport Buses

▼ Coach and Bus

Brighton breezes through awards

And wins recognition for employee participation

by Mike Morgan

BRIGHTON Transport Ltd, the management/ employee owned company that runs Brighton Blue Bus and Lewes Coaches, beat major national contestants at the recent Proshare Awards ceremony in London to win the award for Employee Participation Involvement.

Proshare is an independent non-profit making company funded by HM Treasury, the London Stock Exchange and private investors.

Its mission is to promote responsible share ownership for private individuals and employees.

An independent judging panel was chaired by **Sir Peter Thompson**, formerly chairman of National Freight Corporation.

Brighton Transport finance director Carol Sanders collects Proshare award from TUC general secretary John Monks

▼ Bus

Praise indeed for Midland Red West

MIDLAND Red West has been recognised by the *Redditch and South Birmingham Journal* for its 'dedication to complete customer satisfaction'. A certificate presented to the company says the newspaper also recognises MRW's "outstanding safety record" and its commitment to continuous improvement. Midland Red West has won the *CBW*-sponsored ROSCO national safe driving award for three of the last four years. Two of its Redditch drivers, Enos Boucher and Clive Simmons, have a combined total of 55 years of accident-free driving. Inspector Derek Iverson is pictured displaying the certificate on behalf of staff.

CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week*.

Payment (please tick as appropriate)

Coach and Bus Week

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£49.00	£88.00	£125.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £92.00.	Airmail	1 year £124.00

Transit (Existing Coach and Bus Week Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72.00	£129.00	£183.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £115.00.	Airmail	1 year £147.00

Coach and Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121.00	£217.00	£308.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £164.00.	Airmail	1 year £196.00

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

Owner/Director ❒01
Senior/General Manager ❒02
Engineering/Service Manager ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ❒01
Coach Operator ❒05
Coach & Bus Operator ❒02
Local Government ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	❒01	❒10
6-10	❒02	❒11
11-15	❒03	❒12
16-25	❒04	❒13
26-39	❒05	❒14
40-100	❒06	❒15
101-400	❒07	❒16
401-1000	❒08	❒17
1000+	❒09	❒18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	❒01	❒12	❒23
Parts/Spares	❒02	❒13	❒24
Oil/Fuel	❒03	❒14	❒25
Breakdown	❒04	❒15	❒26
Insurance/Finance	❒05	❒16	❒27
Fuel Cards	❒06	❒17	❒28
Training	❒07	❒18	❒29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	❒08	❒19	❒30
Ferry Crossing	❒09	❒20	❒31
Hotel Bookings	❒10	❒21	❒32
Theatre Tickets	❒11	❒22	❒33
Other (please specify)			❒34

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ❒01
Day Excursions ❒02
British Tours ❒03
European Tours ❒04
Local Government Contracts ❒05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ❒06

By cheque: I enclose a cheque for £ .....made payable to EMAP Business Communications.

By credit card: I authorise you to debit my Mastercard/VISA/ DinersClub/Amex card for the amount of £ .....

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Card number: ❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒

Signed .....

Name .....

Job Title .....

Company .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode..... Tel: .....

Return to: Kerry Young, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department, EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
or phone 01733 467051 *today*

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1994 M VOLVO B6 CAETANO ALGARVE, 34 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Microphone, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Seat Belts and Crew Seat.
Ref: 0144

1992 J MERCEDES V6/211HP NEOPLAN 208 JETLINER 8.5 METRE, 24 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Gold Striped, Brown Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Radio, Pa, TV, Video, Pedestal Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Webasto, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing Blinds, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Servery, Fridge, Tables, Drinks Trays of Seats, Magazine Nets and Crew Seat.
Ref: 0143

1991 J MAN 10.180 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE P35, 28/30 SEATS

Exterior Silver, Red, White & Blue, Interior Grey, C/S Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wired for TV, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Saloon Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Crew Seat, Air Suspension, Red Carpet to gangway, Spare Wheel, 3 Part Screen, Peage Window, Servery at rear.
Ref: 6765

VOLVO

1996 N VOLVO B10M PREMIERE 320, 49/53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Telma, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Microphone, Front Wheel, Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Webasto, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Continental Door, Hot Water Boiler, Fridge, Crew Seat, Courier Light and Litter Bin.
Ref: 0165

1995 M VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 320, 53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Brown Multi Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Webasto, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Seat Belts, Magazine Nets, Armrests, Crew Seat.
Ref: 0254

1994 L VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE 45, 49 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Multi Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Retarder, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat and Black Gangway.
Ref: 6623

1993 K VOLVO B10M PREMIERE 350, 49/53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew Seat and Seat Belts.
Ref: 6786

1992 J VOLVO B10M PLAXTON EXCALIBUR, 49/53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Duo Brown Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Air Conditioning, ABS, Webasto, Driver Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Aircraft Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Continental Door, Hot & Cold Water, Fridge, Magazine Nets, Armrests, Crew Seat, Toilet.
Ref: 0253

DAF

1990 G SCANIA K93 VAN HOOL ALIZEE HB, 51 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Brown Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wiring for TV/Video, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Crew Seat and Hot Water Boiler
Ref: 7045

1988 PRIVATE DAF FHD BOVA FUTURA, 51 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Grey & Red Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Wiring for TV/Video, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Seat Belts, Crew Seat and Centre Toilet.
Ref: 0177

MERCEDES

1993 K MERCEDES OH16 28 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE 45L, 49 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Green, Yellow, Orange and Brown, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Coolbox and Drinks Machine.
Ref: 0051

DOUBLE DECKERS

1988 PRIVATE SCANIA JONCKHEERE P99, 74 SEATS

Exterior Blue & Grey, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, 2 monitors Upstairs, 1 monitor Downstairs, Video, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Telma, Boot Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Crew Seat, Fridge and Sink.
Ref: 6964

1984 PRIVATE MERCEDES NEOPLAN INTEGRAL SKYLINER, 73 SEATS

Exterior Silver and White, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Continental Door, Hot & Cold Water, Servery, Two Tables, Crew Seat, Toilet.
Ref: 0229

INTEGRALS

1989 PRIVATE DUPLE 425 CUMMINS INTEGRAL, 53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Brown Coloured Striped Moquette, Telma, TV, Video, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Integral Locker, Aircraft Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Continental Door, Hot Water, Fridge, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet.
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